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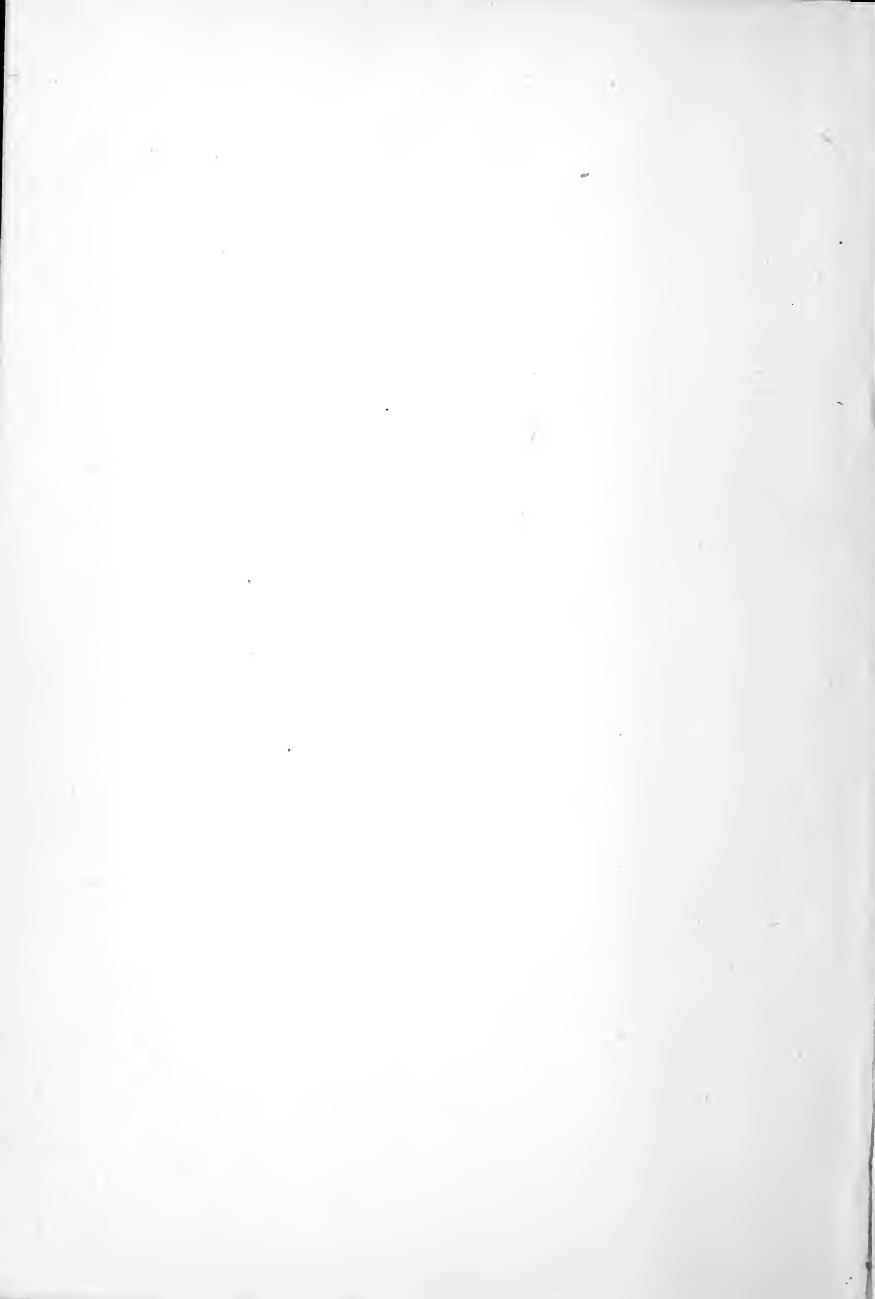
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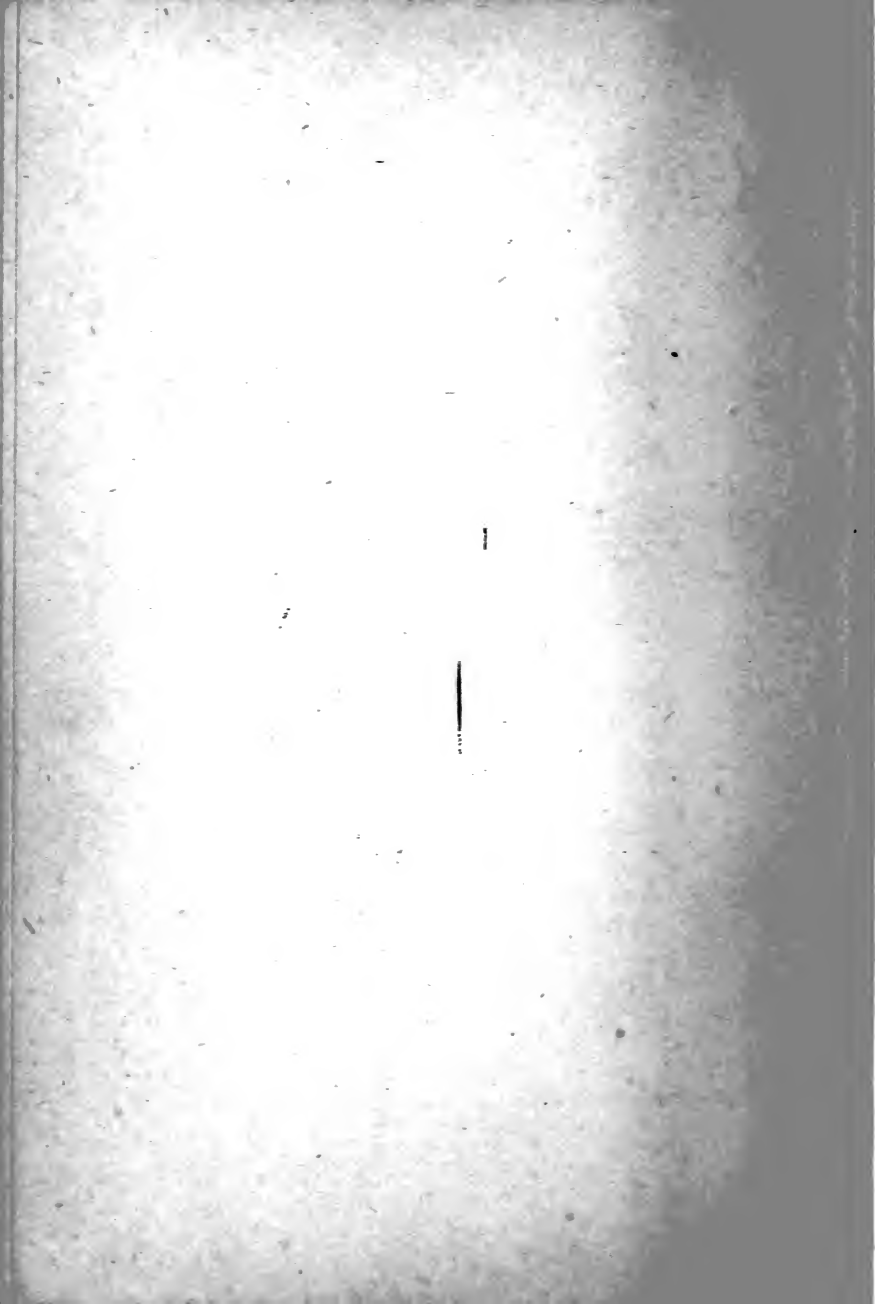












CHILDREN IN CHRIST;

OR,

THE RELATION OF CHILDREN

TO

THE ATONEMENT,

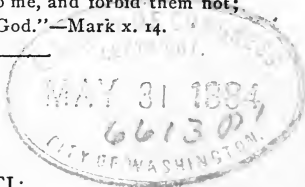
THE GROUND OF THEIR RIGHT TO CHRISTIAN
BAPTISM.

BY

G. H. HAYES, D. D.,

OF THE LOUISVILLE CONFERENCE.

"Suffer the little children to come unto me, and forbid them not;
for of such is the kingdom of God."—Mark x. 14.



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TO ALL LOVERS OF TRUTH
AND
THE CHILDREN,
THIS LITTLE VOLUME IS RESPECT-
FULLY DEDICATED.

INTRODUCTION.

I EXAMINED the manuscript of this book with care. I believe it to be the best presentation of the subject that I have ever seen. The author is a polemic of acknowledged ability, and writes con-amore.

I commend this volume to all lovers of truth. Those who believe in infant baptism will have their faith strengthened; those who have doubts on the subject will have those doubts removed; and those who are opposed to infant baptism will find arguments here that they can not answer.

May the author and his readers so love and practice the truth, as it is in Jesus, that they may all meet in the home prepared for the righteous.

G. B. OVERTON.

CORYDON, KY., February 12, 1884.

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CHILDREN IN CHRIST;

OR,

THE RELATION OF CHILDREN TO THE ATONEMENT,
THE GROUND OF THEIR RIGHT TO
CHRISTIAN BAPTISM.

CHAPTER I.

THE QUESTION STATED.

Proposition: The right of infants to membership in the Church of God, and to Christian Baptism, grows out of, and is inseparable from, the Atonement of our Lord Jesus Christ.

“THE wicked is driven away in his wickedness: but the righteous hath hope in his death.” (Prov. xiv. 32.) This text presents us with two distinct and separate classes, with distinct and widely different destinies. These two classes are all that are recognized in the Bible. There is no neutral

ground—no third party. They are almost at an infinite remove, the one from the other. However nearly they may *seem* to approximate, however hard it may be, sometimes, for man to discover the line of separation, they are as wide apart as sin from holiness, as darkness from light, as bondage from liberty, as death from life, and are destined to be as far apart as hell from heaven. These two classes include the *whole* of the human family. Every human being belongs either to the one or the other, and is destined to dwell in heaven or hell. We are either in favor with God, or we are not. If in favor with God, we are accounted among the righteous; if not, we are among the wicked. If we die in his favor, we will be admitted into heaven; if not, we will be “driven away in our wickedness”—driven down to hell! “for there is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom, in the grave, whither thou goest.” These are facts admitted by all. Let them, therefore, be firmly fixed and kept in the mind of the reader, for we will have use for them as we

proceed. 1. There are *but two* classes. 2. These two classes embrace the *whole race of man*. Now, let us inquire, whence originated the *two* classes? why more than *one*? Did they originate in a separate creation? Did God, originally, create two distinct classes, the wicked and the righteous? To ask such a question, is to answer it. For, however much men may differ about other things, none who recognize the Bible as a revelation from God, and have any respect for its teachings (and we write for none other), will dare assume such a position. We will not, therefore, insult the common-sense of the reader by arguing against such absurdities; but accept the simple, plain Bible history of our origin, and the declaration of the apostle Paul that God "hath made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth."

Not only were there not two *classes* in the original creation, but there were not even two *individuals*! Absolutely, God *created* but *one* individual, viz: Adam. He did not *create* Eve, but took her out of Adam's side—*made* her out of one of

Adam's ribs. She was created, it is true, but only in the same sense that all men since Adam were created, in Adam. In this we see the absolute *oneness* of human nature. No doubt, God could have created Eve independently of Adam, and made them just *alike*, as to nature; but in that case, they would not have been *one* nature, but two, however much alike. This oneness of nature is clearly recognized and set forth in the account of man's creation, as given in Genesis. In the first chapter, after speaking of the creation of everything else, the inspired historian tells us: "And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness; and let *them* have dominion. * * * So God created man in his own image: in the image of God created he him; male and female created he *them*." And in the second chapter, verse 7, "And the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life (lives) and man became a living soul." Here is the account, in brief, of man's *creation*.

Afterward, when "the Lord God caused

a deep sleep to fall upon Adam," and took one of his ribs and made the woman, and brought her unto the man, "Adam said, This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh; she shall be called Woman, because she was *taken out of man*." If she had not been *created* in Adam, she could not have been "taken out of" him. The two classes, then, are not to be accounted for in a separate creation of each; for there was but *one*, and that one bore the image and likeness of God. Of course the individuals composing that class were righteous. But they did not remain so, for in tracing their history, we find that man sinned and forfeited the favor of God.

We inquire, then, did the two classes originate in the *fall* of man? Did a part fall, and a part remain holy, or righteous? To this there is, there can be, but one answer; all fell—man apostatized, and *human nature* became corrupt. Not a part only, but the whole of that nature. Adam and Eve both sinned; and as they each possessed the whole of human nature, and were the only representatives of their kind,

there were none left that did not fall. So, then, there was no division in the fall, no two classes formed yet. Human nature retained its oneness in the fall; and as all who bore that nature fell, we have but one class still, though changed in its relation to God. Before all were righteous; now all are wicked.

Continuing our search for the origin of the two classes, we next inquire, did they originate in a partial or limited atonement? Did God redeem, and provide for the salvation of, a part of the fallen race, and consign, by an arbitrary and irrevocable decree, the rest to everlasting ruin; and that without the possibility of escape? Such a supposition is not only repugnant to the better feelings of our nature, but is contrary to the plain teachings of the Word of God, is opposed to the very philosophy of the plan of salvation, impugns the character of God, and destroys not only the distinction between virtue and vice, but the possibility of the existence of either. The truth is, it is impossible in the very nature of things for God to redeem a part of the human

family, and not all; for to do so would be to destroy the oneness of human nature, or to divide Christ.

We have seen that human nature is a unit. To be a human being, then, is to possess that nature—not a part only, but all of it. To possess only a part, would be to be partly human. Every human being, to be such, must possess the *whole* of human nature. It is because we possess that nature that we are interested in the atonement. The same nature that sinned, was redeemed; and redeemed by the atoning sacrifice of the very nature that sinned. The law—justice—had no claim upon, no demands to make of, any other. Man had transgressed, and man must suffer the penalty. Here was a problem; who could solve it? God's law had been broken; divine justice demanded the punishment of the guilty culprit, and divine mercy compassionated and longed to acquit the prisoner and restore him to life and liberty. What could be done? Only infinite wisdom could tell. Only He who created man could redeem him. How was it done? Not by

the *creation* of a substitute; that would not do. Justice would not, could not, accept such a sacrifice. Another man would not do, unless he possessed the same nature; it was not enough that it be *like* it, it must be the *same* nature. To be the same, it must be *of* it—in some way generated by it. To be generated in the usual, natural way would not do; for then the effects of sin would be entailed, and *death* would be the natural and necessary result, and could not be endured for another. To die for another, the victim must be one on whom death has no claim, and upon whom, on his own account, death could never come. Here was the difficulty: He who would die for and redeem man, must be of the same nature—must be man, and yet be free from sin and its effects. In the miraculous conception and birth of Jesus, the case is met. The divine paternity and the human maternity combine to give to the world a perfect man, free from sin—without “spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing.” He was “made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law, that we

might receive the adoption of sons." (Gal. iv. 4.)

Human nature being a unit, and being represented entire in Adam, in him fell and was brought under the curse of the law; and being under the curse of the law, must suffer the penalty due to its transgression, unless a remedy be provided. Law is inexorable in its demands, exacting the full measure of punishment due for its transgression, and of *all* who have transgressed. Hence the necessity, in redeeming *man*, that *man* should suffer, and that so much of *man*—the *nature* of *man*—as was involved in the sin, should also be involved in the suffering due to that sin. If, therefore, Jesus were not *man*, a perfect *man*, possessing the *whole* of *man's* nature, he could not redeem *man*, because unable to meet the demands of the law upon him. On the other hand, being perfect *man*, possessed of the *whole* of *man's* nature, in redeeming one, he of necessity redeems *all* who bear that nature. Law can no more go beyond exact justice, than it can fail of reaching it. Therefore, if the whole of

human nature suffered once, in the person of Jesus Christ, the law has no further claim upon it; and to inflict punishment upon it, or upon any part of it, again, would be as much to dishonor the law as to have failed to inflict the merited punishment at all. In either case, the law, failing to accomplish the end for which it was designed, would be a nullity. Unless, then, Jesus Christ was less a representative than Adam, it is impossible to limit the atonement to a part—great or small—of the human family. Indeed, if limited at all, it must be limited as to all, that is, limited in its nature, its sufficiency as a remedy for sin, and not as to the number saved; for what will cover one, of necessity covers *all*, with equal sufficiency. In other words, if it is possible for a single descendant of Adam to be lost, without *actual personal* transgression, it is possible for *all* to be lost without personal sin; and then it follows, either that the atonement made by Jesus Christ was insufficient; or that the law may demand punishment twice for the same offense; or that God may arbitrarily

punish his innocent creatures, without regard to law or justice! Upon what ground, then, could we base infant salvation, so as to reach, with any certainty, the conclusion that all, or any, dying in infancy, are saved?

We do not say, for we do not believe, that, in making atonement for man, Jesus Christ suffered the full amount and extent of punishment due to the sins of all men, so that all the punishment that would be endured by the sinner was borne by him; for in that case universal, unconditional salvation would be the result. But we do say that the unity of human nature is such, that whatever was necessary to atone for one human being, was equally and necessarily sufficient for the whole of that nature, however numerous the individuals who bear it; and that, therefore, *all* who were affected by the fall of Adam, in which they could have no *personal* responsibility, were to the same extent, and unconditionally, affected by the atoning death of Jesus Christ. If, therefore, *all* fell in Adam, *all* are redeemed in Christ. The nature that

was alienated from God in Adam; was reconciled to him in Christ: "God was in Christ, reconciling the *world* unto himself." "Jesus Christ, by the grace of God, tasted death for every man." In him we "behold the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world." "He gave himself a ransom for *all*." As God is *one*, and human nature one; and as Jesus Christ was "made of a woman, made under the law, that he might redeem them that are under the law," and *all* bearing that nature were under the law; and as he took upon him the seed of Abraham—the *whole* nature of man—and "in him dwelt the fullness of the God-head, bodily; it follows, of necessity, that *all* were redeemed, absolutely and *unconditionally* redeemed.

The two classes, then, did not originate in a partial or limited atonement. The *oneness* of human nature—made one in creation—was not destroyed by the fall. It was assumed, as a *whole*, by Jesus Christ, and *wholly* redeemed by the atoning sacrifice of himself; so that, in virtue of his death, *every* descendant of Adam stands, until per-

sonal sin is committed, in a saved relation to God; and that *unconditionally*. Where, then, shall we look for the origin of the *two* classes? Evidently, to the point of personal divergence from Christ; to the voluntary act of departure from him—actual, personal transgression of the law, to sin. “Your iniquities have separated between you and your God, and your sins have hid his face from you.” We hazard nothing in saying that, in the very nature of the case, it is impossible for a single human being to be lost, without personal transgression. Nothing but *sin* can separate between a human soul and God. So far, then, from the doctrine of the impossibility of apostasy being true, it is *impossible for any but apostates* to be lost. Heil was made for apostates, and none other can ever enter there! But this by the way.

Our object now is, to show the origin of the wicked, who constitute one of the *two* classes into which our race is divided and in which the *whole* race, *every member of it*, is embraced. God created but *one*. That one was not *divided* in the fall, but contin-

ued a *unit*, though changed in its relation to God. As *one* it was redeemed by Christ, and *in* him restored to the favor of God. And as none can be lost without sin, actual, personal transgression, we necessarily conclude that the other class (the wicked) is formed by the sins of those who, as individuals, voluntarily depart from Christ. All who sin are classed with the wicked, and are destined to be "driven away in their wickedness," to "go away into everlasting punishment;" unless they voluntarily return, by repentance towards God and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ, to be numbered with the righteous, who have hope in their death, and inherit eternal life. In a word, every human being is either *in* Christ, or he is *out of* Christ. If *in* him, he is saved and is accounted righteous. If out of him, he is numbered with the wicked and, unless he repent, will be driven away in his wickedness and be eternally lost; "for our God is a consuming fire."

CHAPTER II.

THE FALL AND RECOVERY.

WE are now prepared to take another step, and affirm that, as every child of man is embraced in the atonement, and stands in a saved relation to God, in virtue of Christ's death, so is *every one* entitled to *all* the blessings and privileges accruing to the world through him, until by personal transgression he forfeits them.

That man is a fallen creature is a fact admitted by all. That he exists, since the fall, by virtue of the atonement, is equally clear. In the fall man lost everything. Life, with everything calculated to perpetuate or make it a blessing, was forfeited by the first transgression. Had God not provided a Savior, the death-penalty must of necessity have been inflicted upon the first transgressors; for his very nature forbids that creatures

should be brought into existence to suffer the consequences of an act in which they had no part, without any possible means of escape therefrom. And as we exist by virtue of the death of Christ, so have we in him, absolutely and unconditionally, all that is needed to make that existence a perfect and perfectly happy one, until by personal transgression we forfeit it. I do not say that we are thereby exempted from natural and physical evils, such as the infirmities attaching to depraved nature, and the dissolution of soul and body, which we call temporal death; but even these could not be allowed to exist if they were not compensated for in the resurrection, of which we have a pledge and first fruits in the resurrection of Christ. But I do say that the grace of salvation, with everything attaching thereto, whether as a means of grace or as a sign and seal of "the righteousness of God;" whether as a type pointing to the coming antitype, or as a memorial of the great fact of redemption consummated in the death and resurrection of Christ, is absolutely and unconditionally se-

cured to every child of man, to be forfeited only by actual, personal transgression.

The Church of God, in a spiritual sense, is nothing more nor less than fallen spirits restored to the favor and image of God, by virtue of the death of Christ, through the agency of the Holy Spirit; and in its visible, organized form it consists of a recognition of this relation to God in Christ by the signs appointed of God, and mutual recognition among the associated worshippers of God. Baptism is a—I may say the—sign of divine ownership, appointed of God himself to designate as his all who are justified in Christ Jesus. It was not given as a sign of repentance nor of faith, but of righteousness—the righteousness of God. It was not, therefore, intended only, nor necessarily, to follow faith; but to encourage and strengthen faith, by setting forth our need of cleansing and symbolizing the purifying influence of “the Holy Spirit of God, whereby we are sealed unto the day of redemption,” and at the same time reminding us that we belong to God and should therefore keep ourselves unspotted from the

world. All, therefore, who belong to God—all who stand in a justified relation to him through Christ—have a right to this sign of divine ownership, this seal of the righteousness of God. Yea, more, justice absolutely demands that it should be placed upon all such; and whoever assumes to forbid it to any, even the *least* of his children, assumes thereby a fearful responsibility, for which he is in nowise to be envied. If this be true—and who will dare gainsay it?—to determine whether children—*infant children*—have or have not a right to Christian baptism, we have only to ascertain whether they stand in a justified relation to God, or not! Need we *argue* that they *do*? Will any affirm that they *do not*? If so, on what ground will they base infant salvation? On what *condition* are those who die in infancy saved? or are all such lost? If they *are not* justified, there must be a *reason why* they are not, and whatever that reason is, when it is found, its removal must be the *condition* of their justification.

Shall we say that *death*, to the infant, is the condition of justification? To this

there are two insuperable objections: First, if death be the *condition*, then they must die *before* they can be justified; for the condition must be fulfilled before that which is consequent on it can be realized; second, it must be a *voluntary* act on the part of those who perform, or comply with, the condition; else it were no condition at all. If justification takes place *after* death, then is the kingdom of heaven composed of *unjustified* persons; for “of such (these unjustified infants) is the kingdom of heaven!” If death is the result of *volition*, then are all who die guilty of suicide; and it follows that God has made the highest crime in the decalogue, viz.: murder—self-murder—the *condition of salvation!* The truth is, it is *impossible* for them to stand in any other than a justified relation to God, until they are capable of sin, for sin is the only thing that can separate from God any of his creatures. Nor is it any reply to this to say, they are depraved; for depravity is not sin, but only the result of it, and the perverted soil to which sin is indigenious.

We would not be misunderstood. We

do not deny the depravity of human nature; nor are we disposed to explain it away. On the contrary, we heartily endorse and teach the doctrine of total depravity. It lies at the very foundation of human redemption. If the *nature* of man had not been attainted by the sin of Adam and Eve, and entailed by them upon their descendants, there would have been no need of a Redeemer, for each and every child would have stood as unblemished as he was unblamable before God, and only the original pair—the transgressors—would have been punished. Where there is no disease there can be no need of a physician. In the fact, therefore, that man *is* depraved, lies the necessity of the atonement. For nothing impure can enter heaven; and the absolute justice of God renders it *impossible* for him either to punish his creatures for an act of which they were not personally guilty, or for actual, personal transgressions *necessitated* by a state or condition into which they were brought without any agency of their own. That man should exist then, after the fall, it became necessary that a Savior

should be provided. To be a perfect Savior, he must provide for *all* who are involved in the consequences of the original transgression; hence, "Jesus Christ by the grace of God tasted death for every man." All who enjoy, or are entitled to, the favor of God, are indebted for the same to the death of Christ, and have a divine, a blood-bought right to *all* the blessings and privileges accruing to the world through him; for God is no respecter of persons. Nothing save Christ and him crucified can possibly secure to a single child of man—young or old—any, even the least blessing or privilege; and, thank God! nothing but sin—actual, personal transgression of divine law—can deprive any of the right to *anything* purchased by his death.

Infant children, as we have seen, are entitled, by virtue of Christ's death, to the blessing of salvation; and, as the greater includes the less, it follows, unavoidably, that they have an indisputable right to membership in the Church, and to the sign and seal of the righteousness of God, secured to them in Christ. In a word, that

they are proper subjects for Christian baptism, and their *right* to this ordinance is inseparable from the atonement. If the right to baptism is not secured by the death of Christ, *how* and by *what* is it secured? This is an important question, and we hope the reader will not lightly pass it by. In order more clearly to see its force and bearing upon the subject, we ask, What gives an adult the *right* to be baptized? Does repentance or faith, or do both, repentance and faith, give him the right? We do not ask whether they are required, or are necessary, in the case of an adult; but is it by *virtue* of them that the right is secured? Evidently not. There is no merit, no virtue, in anything but Christ crucified. Why, then, is an adult required to repent and believe before he receives the ordinance of baptism? Answer: Because he has, by personal transgression, forfeited the favor of God and the right to all blessings purchased by his Son; gone away from Christ, in whom alone the right is found. He must, therefore, return voluntarily, by repentance and faith, in order to avail himself of the

right forfeited by sin. The right inheres in Christ. To leave Christ is to forfeit the right. This he did when he sinned. By repentance and faith he returns to Christ, and to the right which *was* his before he sinned, *because* in Christ. He is not baptized because he believes, but because he stands in a justified relation to God in Christ. This relation, it is true, is secured by faith, which is the condition of justification; but why? why is faith necessary? Because he has *sinned*. To make faith, then, a prerequisite to baptism is to make sin necessary also; for if a man must repent and believe before he is qualified to receive baptism, he must have something to repent of, and in order to this he must *sin*, for nothing but sin can qualify him for repentance. Thus we see that to reject infant baptism is to make *sin a necessary* qualification for the reception of an ordinance of the Church of God. To say that infants ought not to be baptized, because they can not repent and believe, is the same as to say they ought not to be baptized because they have not *sinned*. It is equivalent to

saying they have no right to church membership because they have not *forfeited* that right! It makes *sin* a prerequisite to membership in the Church of God!—a forfeiture of the kingdom essential to the inheritance of it! Recur again to the question, What gives a man the right to Christian baptism, to membership in the Church of God, and to each and *all* the blessings and privileges of the gospel? Can any be at a loss for an answer? Do they not *all* grow out of the death of Christ, and hang around the cross as so many memorials of the great fact of human redemption, culminating in the agonies of the death struggle, which was the life-giving pang to a sin-ruined world? Do they not—the sacraments—receive their significance from thence? and are they not beautiful *only* when seen in the light emitted from the Sun of Righteousness, whose golden beams, falling upon the dewdrops of death, span with the bow of hope the gulf which separates time from eternity, its farther end resting on the walls of the celestial city? Now, if this be true, if *all* are secured by the death of Christ, then

every one recognized by the Father as justified through his blood is entitled to *all* that he purchased. If, therefore, infants are in a justified relation to God by virtue of the atonement, and baptism is secured by the same, it follows, necessarily, that they ought to be baptized.

Again, if baptism is a symbol or sign of any real spiritual blessing resulting from the death of Christ, then all who are the recipients of such blessings are also entitled to the symbol or sign. Baptism is a symbol of spiritual blessings, and infants are the recipients of those blessings; therefore infants are entitled to the ordinance of baptism. Nor does it matter what we make baptism represent, if only it be something purchased by the death of Christ, and of which infants are partakers. If we say it represents the death, burial and resurrection (which however we do not believe), then, as infants have a real interest in his death, and a certain pledge in his resurrection that *they* shall be raised from the dead, they ought by all means to be baptized. If they are possessed of a fallen, depraved

nature, which must be cleansed, renewed, in order to their inheriting eternal life; and if that cleansing is secured by the death of Christ and applied by the Holy Spirit, and baptism is a sign of that cleansing, it would be unreasonable and unjust to withhold it from them. In whatever light we view the subject—unless we deny human depravity and say that infants have no need of a Savior, no interest in the atonement—the only reasonable conclusion to which we can possibly come is, that infants are proper subjects for and have a divine right to Christian baptism.

CHAPTER III.

THE UNITY OF THE SCRIPTURES.

SUCH is the conclusion to which reason, in the light of the atonement as a *revealed fact*, conducts us. If our reasoning is found to accord with the facts of Scripture there can be no defect in it, and our conclusion *must be* the truth. We proceed then to inquire, Is the right of infants to Christian baptism recognized by God in the Bible? In seeking an answer to this question we must have recourse to the Bible *alone*, but to *all* the Bible. We must begin with the first word that fell from the lips of God upon the ear of fallen man, and carefully note everything that is said and done by him or by his direction, that Infinite Wisdom has seen proper to record for our instruction; for "*all* Scripture is given by inspiration, and is profitable." The Bible,

like the plan of redemption, was begun, carried on and completed in Jesus Christ our Lord; and like it is *one* and indivisible. The kingdom of heaven is essentially a spiritual one; yet, in order to its establishment, it became necessary that the King should be manifested in the *flesh*; and as well might we now contend that, as the atonement is finished, and no further sacrifice is needed, we have no further interest in the *incarnate* Son, as to contend that, as the prophecies and types pointing to the coming of Christ and the perfected organization of his Church have met their fulfillment in him, we have no further use for the Old Testament Scriptures. As well contend that, as Christ Jesus did not complete the work of atonement until he grew to the perfect stature of manhood, we have no interest in the babe of Bethlehem, as to contend that, as the Church did not reach the zenith of her power until her brow was wreathed with the chaplet of fire on the day of Pentecost, she had no existence before, or that we have no interest in her history.

Jesus was as really the Son of God and the Redeemer of the world when the star of the wise men went and "stood over where the young child lay," as when he asserted his power over death and the grave, and smote the Roman soldiery with the glories of his triumphant resurrection. So the gospel was as really "the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth," when first it fell from the lips of God in the prophetic announcement, "The seed of the woman shall bruise the serpent's head," as when Peter, on the day of Pentecost, said, "Ye men of Israel, hear these words: Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved of God among you by miracles and wonders and signs, which God did by him in the midst of you, as ye yourselves also know, him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain;" or as when Paul stood in the midst of Mars Hill, and, calling the attention of the Athenians to the inscription on one of their altars, "To the unknown God," said:

“Whom therefore ye ignorantly worship, him declare I unto you.”

In this promise, “The seed of the woman shall bruise the serpent’s head,” we recognize the whole of the gospel, to be unfolded in the future dealings of God with the human race, exemplified in the life of Christ, the promised seed, and to culminate in the grandeur of finished perfection on the cross.

If Jesus Christ is the Savior of the *world*, then all who have ever been saved have been saved by him, and, if saved by him, saved through the merits of his death; for he is “as a Lamb slain from the foundation of the world.” If they were not saved through the merits of his death, then either they were not saved *at all*, or the death of Christ was an *unnecessary* sacrifice; for, if for four thousand years God could save man without the sacrifice of his Son, he might have continued to save in the same way, and the sufferings and death of Jesus Christ are wholly unnecessary! But many were saved, as the Scriptures plainly teach, and to say they were not saved through the blood of Jesus

Christ, is to charge God with a work of supererogation and the *useless* sacrifice of his only Son to suffering and death! If the death of Jesus Christ was the procuring cause of salvation then, as it is now, it was made available by the same means—applied on the same conditions—that it is now; *i. e.*, by faith—faith, too, in the same Savior and through the same gospel. If they had the gospel and were saved by faith, they constituted the Church of God; for the Church of God is nothing more than fallen spirits redeemed by the death of Jesus Christ, and *saved* through the merits of his blood. A recognition of these, on the part of God, by sign or seal appointed by himself, constitutes the *visible* Church. The gospel was designed to be the power of God unto salvation to them that believe; the saved to constitute the Church, and the sign by which they are recognized before men as the people of God to render them the *visible* Church. We have seen that, from the day of expulsion from Eden, man has had the gospel; and that from the time that Abel, by faith, offered a more excellent sacrifice

than Cain, God has had a Church in the world. Now, if we can find when the first sealing ordinance, or sign, was appointed, we shall see when the *visible* Church was organized; and if we can find upon whom that sign and seal was placed by divine authority, we shall learn who are entitled to membership in the Church. In our search we turn to the Bible, and, that we may know *all* that is revealed on the subject, we begin with the *fall* of man and carefully note the unfoldings of Infinite Wisdom in the development of that promise which became the pledge of an earthly existence to man, and the foundation on which he might build a hope of eternal happiness.

Bear in mind, we base the right of all—infants and adults—to salvation and everything pertaining thereto, on the atonement, and contend that everything purchased by Christ is secured *unconditionally* to all, till forfeited by personal transgression; and now inquire whether, in his dealings with man, God has recognized this right. No one doubts that, when God said to Adam, “Dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou

return," he included all his descendants also. But the justice of that sentence can be found only in the fact that, "as in Adam all die, so in Christ shall all be made alive." As certainly as *all* die as a result of Adam's transgression, shall *all* be raised from the dead as a result of the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. But only they who die *in* Christ shall be raised to everlasting life; the rest, to shame and everlasting contempt. If, therefore, infants had not been embraced in the *promise*, they *could not* have been embraced in the curse; for, unless they died *in* Christ, they could not be raised to eternal life, and as they were not personally guilty they could not, by a just God, be consigned to eternal death. Thus, in the very fact that infants die, physically, we have abundant proof that they were embraced in the first covenant promise of God to man. Yea, more, in their death we find a display of divine *mercy*. Instance the death of the antediluvians: Only on the hypothesis that all the infants were saved in heaven can we reconcile the justice of God with the destruction of the world by

the waters of the flood. But, assuming that they were, we not only see the justice of God in cutting off the wicked doers, but his mercy also, in taking the innocent infants to everlasting happiness, instead of leaving them to grow up under the evil influences which would, almost certainly, lead them to everlasting destruction. The mercy of God is seen also in sparing the only righteous man and his family. The judgment of God, which they had seen visited upon a wicked world, was a fearful warning to them against sin; while their own preservation was evidence that righteousness would be rewarded. And, as there were now no wicked doers in the world, to entice them from the paths of virtue, they would have a fair opportunity to raise their children "in the nurture and admonition of the Lord."

That they might not be troubled with the fear of another flood, the Lord established a covenant with them, and *with their seed after them*, saying, "Neither shall all flesh be cut off any more by the waters of a flood; neither shall there any more be a

flood to destroy the earth." The token of this covenant was a "bow in the cloud." In this "covenant" and "token" *all*, both young and old, were and are interested. When men began again to multiply upon the earth, forgetting the judgment which had followed the sins of their fathers—or, perhaps, presuming upon the covenant of the Lord—they turned aside again into their wicked ways. They even sought to defy the Lord, in building "a city, and a tower, whose top should reach unto heaven." But "the Lord came down to see the city and tower which the children of men builded;" and thwarted their purpose by confounding their language, so that they could not understand one another's speech, and scattering them abroad upon the face of the earth. In this visitation, also, the children were included, and hence the diversity of tongues continues; the parents transmitting their several languages to their children, and thus keeping up a perpetual memorial of this second great miraculous visitation of God upon man.

"But what has all this to do with the

subject under consideration? There is not a word about the Church, or even of salvation, in all the transaction." True, but it shows how, from the beginning, God has dealt with man, recognizing the essential *unity* of human nature, and, in the *diversity* consequent on this judgment, necessitating the *form* of the promise to be given in the next covenant of God with man. Until the building of the tower of Babel, not only was human *nature* a unit, but there was a oneness of nationality and language also. Thenceforward, while the unity of nature continued, there was to be a diversity of nationalities and languages; and as all were equally involved in the fall, and all equally interested in the promised Seed, which should bruise the serpent's head, it became necessary in renewing the promise of the Seed—which also is *one*—and the promise was never renewed until this necessity existed—to adapt the promise to the diversified condition of that nature which was to be redeemed. Hence, in the covenant made with Abraham the language is, "In thee shall all families of the earth be blessed,"

“and all the nations of the earth shall be blessed in him.” It is true, the promise in this covenant is twofold; and in this is seen, not only the mercy of God in extending the promise of salvation to *all* the descendants of Adam, but his wisdom also in adapting the means to the end to be accomplished. However diversified the conditions of the human race, in consequence of sin, they are destined, if saved, to be *one* in Christ Jesus and to speak *one* language, the pure language of Zion; and as they descended from *one* head, Adam, so they are to constitute *one* body, the head of which is Christ. But, as they who were to constitute the members of this body were “partakers of flesh and blood,” it was necessary that he should take “part of the same;” hence the incarnation—“God manifest in the flesh.”

“The Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world,” was already slain, in the purpose of the Almighty, and his blood was already efficacious in the pardon of sin; but the world was not ready for his reception in the flesh—not prepared to understand and appreciate his coming. The nations of

the earth were to be taught that there is but one God, the Creator of all and on whom all depend for life and all life's blessings; also, that all wrong-doing is sin, sin against God, and can be forgiven only by him. In order to this there must be a peculiar people—peculiar for their devotion to the one true and living God, and for the manifestation of his favor in blessing them and in defending them from the fury of their enemies. Hence the promise to Abraham: "I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee and make thy name great." This, however, is not the end or object, but only the means to accomplish it; hence it is added, "In thee shall all families of the earth be blessed." Abraham is to be blessed, but chiefly that he may be made a blessing to the world.

This promise of blessings to all nations was based upon the atonement and conditioned, to each and every individual, upon the acceptance, by faith, of the promised "seed, which is Christ," as the only medium through which blessings could come. The covenant, on the part of man, was this

acceptance with its implied promise of faithfulness unto death; and the token of the covenant, "the sign of circumcision, a seal of the righteousness of the faith," by which Christ was accepted. The people thus believing and sealed were the peculiar people of God, and constituted the Church of God. Among these infants are found, recognized by God as covered by the atonement, embraced in the promise, and sealed as a part of the Church entitled to all its blessings and privileges. Unless, therefore, God or the *nature* of man has changed, or the law recognizing infant membership has been repealed, as they are still covered by the atonement and are "of the kingdom of God," infants are still entitled to the recognition of their membership in the sealing ordinance of the Church, viz.: Christian baptism.

CHAPTER IV.

THE PROMISE AND COVENANT.

WHEN we speak of the covenant with Abraham, we do not mean that a *new* Church was formed and a *new* promise given; but, simply, that the original promise was *renewed* and the Church, in her outward forms, adapted to the peculiar condition of the human family. Christ was the Savior of the *world*, the Redeemer of mankind, of human nature as a whole; and, as the circumstances of that nature were now changed, and the relations among men diversified, it became necessary to impress upon their minds the fact that no changes in the circumstances and relations of men among themselves could, in the least, affect their relation to God, or change the nature which he had given them—that he had redeemed *man*, as such, and that,

as individuals, to whatever nation they might belong, and whatever their relations and circumstances in life, salvation was offered to them, and if they rejected or neglected it, it would be at their own hazard. Hence the promise is to "all nations." We say, had redeemed, because the blood of Jesus Christ was just as efficacious in the pardon of sin when the promise was first given, as it is now, ever was or ever will be.

The promise *renewed* to Abraham was the same that was originally *made* to Adam, and, of necessity, was as universal in its bearings upon man. The covenant was the application of the promise to particular individuals, "a coming together" of God and man on the basis of the atonement, which was made by Christ, the promised seed. The promise was, "in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed;" the covenant was, "to be a God unto thee and to thy seed after thee." The one having reference to the universality of the atonement and the blessings accruing to the world thereby; the other is a confirmation of the

promise to them who, by faith, accept the proffered deliverance, and a guarantee of eternal happiness to all who keep the covenant to the end of life. The one was the gospel *preached*, the other the gospel *confirmed* by faith in them that heard it. "Know ye therefore that they which are of faith, the same are the children of Abraham. And the scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the heathen through faith, preached before the gospel unto Abraham, saying, In thee shall all nations be blessed." (Gal. iii. 7-8.) Here we have undoubted authority for calling the promise made to Abraham, the gospel preached; and also for declaring that faith is necessary to confirm that gospel in blessings to the hearer.

Paul, speaking of this very thing—the receiving of the promise by faith—says, "And this I say, that the covenant that was confirmed before of God in Christ, the law, which was four hundred and thirty years after, can not disannul, that it should make the promise of none effect." (Gal. iii. 17.) Thus we see that the great end had in view

in the covenant made with Abraham was the offer of salvation to the whole human family, through our Lord Jesus Christ; and that the temporal blessings promised to Abraham and his seed according to the flesh were only means to accomplish the end. Now, to this covenant there was fixed a sign, a seal: "This is my covenant, which ye shall keep, between me and you and thy seed after thee; every man-child among you shall be circumcised. And ye shall circumcise the flesh of your foreskin; and it shall be a token of the covenant betwixt me and you." (Gen. xvii. 10, 11.) That this "token of the covenant" had reference to spiritual blessings, and was the visible bond of union between the people of God, constituting them the visible Church, is plainly taught by the apostle Paul, in the language following: "And he received the sign of circumcision, a seal of the righteousness of the faith which he had yet being uncircumcised: that he might be the father of all them that believe, though they be not circumcised; that righteousness

might be imputed unto them also." (Rom. iv. 11.)

The Abrahamic covenant, then, was a mutual agreement between God on the one part, and Abraham and his seed on the other—seed being defined by the apostle to mean all who are "the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus"—and the basis of agreement, the point at which they come together, the at-ONE-ment. "The token of the covenant" was circumcision. Appointed by God, to be kept by Abraham, it was the sign of faith and the seal of the righteousness which is by faith. We must not conclude, however, that circumcision must necessarily *follow* faith, nor that none but they who are capable of faith—of understanding the covenant and believing the promise—are to receive the token; for infants are specifically embraced in the promise, and commanded to be circumcised at "eight days old."

We have now reached the point from which the history of the Church may be traced to the time of the incarnation of the Son of God, the perfecting of the work of

atonement and the closing up of prophecy and revelation. We have seen that, since the fall, Jesus Christ, and him crucified, is the only medium of access God has ever had to man, or man to God; that life and all life's blessings, spiritual and temporal, were secured by the death of him who was "as a Lamb slain from the foundation of the world;" and that all these blessings—including salvation in heaven—were absolutely and unconditionally secured to every child of man, until forfeited by *actual, personal* transgression. We have also seen that, in all his dealings with man, God has recognized this fact and included infants in every promise and covenant he has made to and with man. And finally, that, in the "covenant confirmed of God in Christ," to be kept by Abraham and his seed, "for an everlasting covenant," he has embraced infants and placed upon them his own sign and seal. Now, unless it shall appear that this "everlasting covenant" has been displaced by another, or modified by God himself, infants are still entitled to all the blessings and privileges secured thereby; and

any interference with their rights, on the part of parents or others, is a positive wrong to the infants and an offense against God. Has the Abrahamic covenant been thus displaced, or modified so as to exclude infants? If so, we shall surely find some record of it in the Bible. It will not be contended that any such change was made previous to the coming of Christ in the flesh, and we might content us with *asserting* what none will deny; but the argument is cumulative, and we prefer to notice a few facts developed in the history of the Church under what is called the Mosaic dispensation. Let the grand, central fact of human redemption, Christ crucified, be kept prominently before the mind as the basis of our argument—the ground on which the right of *all*, infants and adults, to any and every blessing and privilege is based. Remember that he is the great Sun of the moral system, and that the truths of revelation are the rays of light emitted from him—“The entrance of thy word giveth light”—and that these rays, like the rays of the natural sun, “unite and mingle

into one," the Bible. "Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path," is as applicable to the New as to the Old Testament; and, "I am the light of the world," was as really true before as after "the Word was made flesh and dwelt among us."

The nature of man being the same, and Jesus Christ being "the same yesterday, to-day and forever," it follows that the relation which that nature sustains to God in or through Christ must also remain the same. The relation being the same, and God being unchanged and unchangeable, he can not cease to *recognize* that relation. Either, then, human nature, as manifested or existing in infants, *never* sustained any *recognized* relation to God by virtue of the atonement of Christ, or it *does* sustain some *recognized* relation *now*. But we have seen that the same relation which exists between an adult *believer* and God exists also between infants and God, and that the sign and seal by which the relation of the adult is *recognized* is, by the same authority, placed upon the infant. Now, unless it can be shown that this law of recognition has been re-

pealed by the same authority that enacted it, the unavoidable conclusion is that it is still binding, and that to refuse to observe it is to show contempt for the Lawgiver. If, on the other hand, this law *has been* repealed, to continue its observance is to hold in contempt the authority by which it was repealed. But it *has not* been repealed; and the proof of this is the fact that no such record can be found. Nay, more; it has not only not been repealed, but it is impossible in the very nature of things that it could be.

The atonement can neither be enlarged nor diminished. Its circumference is bounded by the love of God and marked by the blood of Jesus Christ. Whoever, of the human race, is compassed by the love of God, is redeemed by the blood of Christ. "Hereby perceive we the love of God, because he laid down his life for us." The evidence of his love is that "he gave his only begotten Son." To give the Son is to give *all* that is embraced in him. Anything less would imply a partial gift—the gift of a *part* only, and not the whole of the

Son. To whomsoever, therefore, the Son is given belongs of right, and necessarily, *all* that inheres in him. If it can be shown that the right to any blessing, privilege, immunity, rite, ordinance or sacrament exists independently of Christ, or was or can be originated by anything else than the sacrificial offering made by him in his death, then, to *that* blessing, privilege or whatever else it may be called, we set up no claim either for adults or infants who are saved by virtue of the atonement. But we can not consent to limit or divide the atonement itself.

A careful study of the plan of salvation, as developed in the dealings of God with man, and recorded in the Bible, will, we think, satisfy any unprejudiced mind of the truth of what we have said. To help in that study, we proceed to note a few facts in that history. The original promise being, as we have seen, *renewed* to Abraham in a form adapted to the changed condition of man, and a covenant entered into with him upon the basis of that promise—the promise that “the seed of the woman shall

bruise the serpent's head," and in which, as the seed of Abraham, "all the families of the earth" are to be blessed—and a "seal" being set to that covenant, which is to be a "sign" of the righteousness which is to be attained to by faith in the promised seed, thus constituting and *marking* them as the peculiar people of God, the history of his family, thenceforward, is fraught with interest to the whole human race—all the nations of the earth. That history is but a gradual development to man of the plan of salvation. The plan was not originated in nor with Abraham. It originated in the mind of God and was *perfect*. It needed no additions, no modification, and admitted of no *change*. It was unfolded to and for the inspection of man just as, in the wisdom of God, was seen to be the best for him. In that unfolding a special and tender regard is had for the children at every step.

The promise originally given to Adam was *renewed* to Abraham, and afterward repeated to Isaac in the same form: "In thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be

blessed." (Gen. xxvi. 4.) In the twenty-eighth chapter, fourteenth verse, it is repeated to Jacob: "And in thee and in thy seed shall all the *families* of the earth be blessed." These different forms of the same promise can not be regarded as the result of accident, for they are the utterances of Infinite Wisdom, and their adaptedness to the nature and necessities of man evidences their divine origin. The *nature* of man is a *unit*, and as such it is redeemed by "*one* man," Christ Jesus, who took upon himself that nature, entire. But while the nature is *one*, it is possessed by a number of individuals, each one of whom is embraced in in the atonement *because* the nature which they each and all alike possess was redeemed by the one atoning sacrifice. By the appointment of God, these individuals exist in groups or families. These families make up communities, and these communities unite to form nations, etc. Now, there is a mutual dependency, growing out of the oneness of nature, running through the whole, from the smallest families upward and outward through the whole *human fam-*

ily, which is one. As each family is just what the individuals constituting it make it, so each community is what the families make it; and so on through governments, nations, the world.

This being true, the importance of proper family government will be readily seen by all. And it requires but little acquaintance with history, or a moderate degree of observation, to satisfy any one that the best regulated family governments are those where the Bible is recognized as the rule of action. Why is this? We answer, because the religion provided by God for, and revealed in the Bible to man, is adapted by Infinite Wisdom to the necessities of his nature. The first church or religious society, with sign and seal of righteousness appointed, of which we have any account, was in a *family*—the family of Abraham. The reason given by God himself for the selection of Abraham with whom to make the covenant is, “For I know him, that he will command his *children* and his household after him, and they shall keep the way of the Lord, to do jus-

tice and judgment." (Gen. xviii. 19.) Thus we see that in the "everlasting covenant," which was "confirmed of God in Christ," and which was to benefit all nations and families of the earth, the children were to be commanded after the father. What is implied in this the facts in the history show. The sign and seal of the covenant was placed upon infants. Strange that they were not allowed to grow up and choose for themselves!

After this we have no special mention of children, except as they are embraced in the general history of Israel and in the blessings pronounced upon the sons of Jacob, until the giving of the law amid the thunderings of Mount Sinai. The ten commandments, written by the finger of God upon tables of stone, are an embodiment of laws such as, in the very nature of things, are binding upon all men, through all time. They are adapted alike, to all conditions of men. No changes of relations among men, nor of forms of government—Church or State—can in the least affect them. Among these commandments is one corresponding

precisely with the duty of parents to command their children: "Honor thy father and thy mother." That this was intended to apply to children at a very early age is proved by the connection in which it is quoted by the apostle Paul, Ephesians vi. 1-4: "Children, obey your parents in the Lord: for this is right." How does the apostle prove that it is right for children to obey their parents? By quoting the commandment: "Honor thy father and thy mother," which he tells us, "is the first commandment with promise."

The duties of parents and children are reciprocal; beginning, however, with the parents. If parents would have their children to honor them with obedience "in the Lord," they must "bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord;" that is, they must recognize their relation to God in Christ, in the use of the appointed ordinance of God, and teach them the obligations imposed thereby—feed them with food convenient, that, thus nourished, they may grow up "in the way they should go," and when they are old they "will not de-

part from it." "And now, Israel, what doth the Lord thy God require of thee, but to fear the Lord thy God, to walk in all his ways, and to love him, and to serve the Lord thy God with all thy heart and with all thy soul, to keep the commandments of the Lord, and his statutes, which I command thee this day for thy good? Behold, the heaven and the heaven of heavens is the Lord's thy God, the earth also, with all that therein is. Only the Lord had a delight in thy fathers to love them, and he chose their seed after them, even you above all people, as it is this day. Circumcise therefore the foreskin of your heart, and be no more stiff-necked." (Deut. x. 12-16.) Here we learn that the covenant made with the fathers—the Abrahamic covenant—required them to love the Lord with all the heart, and with all the soul, and that circumcision, the seal of the covenant, was significant of that fact. The circumcision of the flesh was a sign of the circumcision of the heart, called by the apostle "the righteousness which is by faith."

It was not enough that *they* should be

circumcised and keep the commandments of God; the covenant was to be perpetual. It was an everlasting covenant: "Therefore shall ye lay up these my words in your heart and in your soul, and bind them for a sign upon your hand, that they may be as frontlets between your eyes. And ye shall teach them your children, speaking of them when thou sittest in thy house." (Deut. xi. 18, 19.) That the children were circumcised, all are compelled to admit, and here we are plainly told that they are to be taught the words of the Lord; evidently, that they may know the obligations of this covenant relation, and "love and serve the Lord with all their heart and with all their soul."

Again, Moses, after forty years' wandering in the wilderness, and just before his death, called all Israel together, and, after reminding them of the great temptations through which they had passed, and of the signs and great miracles which they had seen, said unto them: "Ye stand this day all of you before the Lord your God; your captains of your tribes, your elders, and

your officers, with all the men of Israel, your *little ones*, your wives, and thy stranger that is in thy camp, from the hewer of thy wood unto the drawer of thy water: that thou shouldest *enter into covenant* with the Lord thy God, and into his *oath*, which the Lord thy God maketh with thee this day; that he may establish thee to-day for a people unto himself, and that he may be unto thee a God, as he hath said unto thee, and as he hath sworn unto thy fathers, to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob." (Deut. xxix. 10.) Here the "little ones," as well as the captains, elders, officers, wives and strangers, "stand before the Lord their God," and "*enter into covenant* with the Lord their God, and into his *oath*," "that he may establish" them "*for a people unto himself*," and that he may be unto them a God, as he had "sworn unto their fathers, to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob." Nearly six hundred and fifty years had passed since God had entered into covenant with Abraham, promising to be a God unto him and to his seed after him, and that he would establish his covenant for an *everlasting* cove-

nant. Abraham, Isaac and Jacob had fallen asleep, Israel had suffered in cruel bondage for four hundred and thirty years, many changes had been experienced, as generation after generation came and passed away, but no change had been wrought in the promise of God. The "everlasting covenant" remained unaltered, and under it the "little ones" were still recognized as a part of the people of God.

Nor is this all. The promise still reaches forward, and the covenant embraces generations yet unborn: "Neither with you only do I make this covenant and this oath; but with him that standeth here with us this day before the Lord our God, and also with him that is not here with us this day." (Ver. 15.) That future generations were intended by this language is evident from what immediately follows: "Lest there should be among you man, or woman, or family, or tribe, whose heart turneth away this day from the Lord our God, to go and serve the gods of these nations; lest there should be among you a root that beareth gall and wormwood; and it come to pass,

when he heareth the words of this curse, that he bless himself in his heart, saying, I shall have peace, though I walk in the imagination of mine heart, to add drunkenness to thirst." In this and the remaining part of the chapter—which we hope the reader will carefully examine—the reason for embracing unborn generations in the covenant is given. It was, as declared to Abraham, to be an everlasting covenant; and though some, even whole nations, should "forsake the covenant of the Lord," the covenant itself should not be destroyed, but abide forever.

I know it is said that the Abrahamic covenant was *carnal*, and that circumcision was only a national distinction, and, as a seal of the covenant, was only a pledge of *earthly* possessions in the land of Canaan, but upon what ground I have never been able to see, unless to avoid the conclusion to which the spirituality of that covenant, when admitted, forces us in regard to the church-membership of children! Certainly there is nothing in the covenant itself, as origin-

ally given, to necessitate such a conclusion; and all the facts connected with the development and fulfillment of it absolutely forbid the idea of carnality. It is true, the earthly Canaan—temporal blessings—were included in the promise and covenant; but only on the principle recognized by our Savior, and which has existed from the first, that, if ye “seek first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness, all these things shall be added unto you.” It is true also, that the literal descendants of Abraham were embraced in the promise, but only as we have before said, as a means to accomplish the end. Abraham was blessed, in this sense, that he might be made a blessing, spiritually, to all the nations of the earth. The basis and central idea of the covenant is Christ. He, according to the apostle Paul, is the promised seed: “Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made. He saith not, And to seeds, as of many; but as of one, And to thy seed, which is Christ.” (Gal. iii. 16.) Christ is the sum and substance of the promise—of all the promises—so that to receive the promise is

to receive Christ; and to receive Christ is to receive all possible good.

We have said before, and now repeat, that every blessing, spiritual and temporal, ever enjoyed by man since Adam sinned—either possessed or in prospect—results to him from the atonement, being secured by the sacrificial death of Christ, who was “as a lamb slain from the foundation of the world.” All spiritual blessings are, on the part of adults, received by faith. All temporal blessings that are or may be enjoyed by all men, without regard to piety, if honestly gotten, depend upon their own efforts under the blessing of God. If temporal blessings are made the subject of special promise to particular individuals or communities, it can be done only on the basis of the atonement, and conditioned on the acceptance of Christ, by whom all blessings are purchased, and in whom the right to all blessings inheres. It is, therefore, impossible—we speak it reverently—for God to enter into covenant with man, securing to him thereby the right and title to any temporal, earthly inheritance, except on the

basis of the atonement, and by embracing Christ, the atoning sacrifice, in that covenant, as the medium through which to convey the promised temporal blessings. If the covenant be sealed, the seal, of necessity, becomes a guarantee of security to *all* the blessings promised; and, as the less is contained in the greater, can do so only by securing the greater. As Christ is the sum of all good—the medium through which all blessings come—to receive him is to receive all. The seal of the covenant, then, to be worth anything, must include Christ. As Christ must be received by faith, and as the faith that receives him is counted to the believer for righteousness, and that righteousness is the condition of receiving the temporal blessings, the seal must be just what Paul tells us circumcision was—“a seal of the righteousness of faith.”

Thus we see that, even if it could be proved that the covenant made with Abraham had reference to temporal blessings only, the seal to that covenant must, in order to secure them, embrace Christ as the procuring cause, and signify the relation

sustained to him, which is necessary to the inheritance, and can not, therefore, in any proper sense, be called carnal. To avoid this conclusion, it must be made appear either that man did not lose *everything* in the fall, or that some things are restored to him independently of Christ and the atonement; neither of which will be attempted by any who believe the Bible. In perfect accordance with this are the facts in the history of the Israelites, under the Abrahamic covenant. Notwithstanding the promise and the covenant of circumcision with which it was sealed, the inheritance of the *earthly Canaan* was made to depend on love and obedience to God: "I call heaven and earth to record this day against you, that I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing; therefore choose life, that both thou and thy seed may live: That thou mayest *love* the Lord thy God, and that thou mayest *obey* his voice, and that thou mayest cleave unto him: for he is thy life, and the length of thy days: that thou mayest dwell in the land which the Lord sware unto thy fathers, to Abraham, to Isaac, and

to Jacob, to give them." (Deut. xxx. 20.)

Moses, after speaking of the curses that should befall them, "because they had forsaken the covenant of the Lord God of their fathers," tells them that, if they "return unto the Lord," they and their children, with all their heart and with all their soul, the Lord will bring them into the land which their fathers possessed. "And the Lord thy God will circumcise thine heart, and the heart of thy seed, to love the Lord thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, that thou mayest live." (Deut. xxx. 1-6.) Here we are clearly taught, first, that the inheritance and continued possession of even the earthly Canaan, depended upon obedience, as the condition, and that that obedience should proceed from love; second, that the state of mind, or heart, necessary to the required obedience was called circumcision—the circumcision of the heart; third, that this circumcision of the heart is the work of God; fourth, that the condition upon which the Lord circumcised their hearts was, that they

should "return unto the Lord;" fifth, that the Lord circumcised the hearts of the children, as well as the adults. If it be said that the promise, "I will circumcise the heart of thy seed" means, simply, descendants, and has reference to them as adults, we ask, How do you know? Where is the authority for saying so? Did not the "little ones" stand before the Lord with the elders, captains and others, and enter into covenant with the Lord and into his oath? and was it not by forsaking the covenant that they were estranged from the Lord and became strangers in strange lands, according to the curses of the covenant? And was not the law, which was to be "read before all Israel in their hearing," to be read to the little ones? "Gather the people together, men, and women, and children, and the stranger that is within thy gates, that they may hear and that they may learn, and fear the Lord your God, and observe to do all the words of this law: and their children, which have not known anything, may hear, and learn to fear the Lord your God, as long as ye live in the land whither ye go over Jordan

to possess it." (Deut. xxxi. 12.) Were they capable of all this, and yet not fit subjects for being circumcised in heart? Or, did the Lord embrace them in the covenant and have its seal placed upon them, and hold them responsible and visit the curses of a broken covenant upon them, without securing any of the blessings of the covenant to them? For it is evident that, if they did not enjoy spiritual blessings, many of them never realized any; for they were carried into captivity and suffered many things, and even death, without ever having an inheritance in the promised Canaan. What then becomes of the promise and oath of the Almighty? "All the promises of God are in him (Christ) yea, and in him Amen, unto the glory of God by us." Now this covenant, St. Paul tells us (Gal. iii. 17), "was confirmed of God in Christ." It was, then, impossible, that it should fail in any part, or to any whom it embraced. It follows, therefore, that if the promise and covenant were carnal, and had reference only to the earthly Canaan, *all* to whom the promise was given and who were em-

braced in the covenant were actually settled in that land and received an inheritance there. Was this the case? Do the facts of history justify such a conclusion? Every one knows they do not. Not even Abraham ever received an "inheritance in it; no, not so much as to set his foot on." (Acts vii.) Has the promise of God failed? No; that is impossible. But it has most certainly failed if it was carnal, and had reference to the earthly Canaan only. What, then, is the conclusion? Necessarily this: The promise was spiritual, embracing Christ, and, in him, an inheritance in the heavenly Canaan, and circumcision was a seal of the righteousness necessary to such inheritance.

If we admit that the requirements made in these passages upon the children are to be met in adult age, the argument loses none of its force. For, if they were not, as children, required to return unto the Lord, it was because they had not departed from him—had not forsaken the covenant; and, if they had not forsaken the covenant, they were still in it and entitled to all the

blessings secured by it. But they *could not* be in the covenant unless they were embraced in the atonement, upon which the covenant was made; and if embraced in the atonement, they were entitled to all the blessings resulting from it, until by personal transgression they forfeited them. That they were embraced in the covenant, is an undisputed, because an indisputable fact, and that the sign of circumcision was, by express command of God, placed upon them is equally undeniable, and St. Paul tells us that circumcision was a seal of righteousness—the righteousness of faith. Now, it is evident that righteousness is not used here in the sense of right doing, active obedience—“works of righteousness which we have done;” but rather in the sense of justification, freedom from sin. It expresses a state of being—relation—rather than active service, as is evident from the whole argument of the apostle where the expression is used. Abraham believed God, and it was counted to him for righteousness; *i. e.*, his faith was accepted instead of right doing, and he was recognized as sustaining

the same relation to God as though he had never sinned—the same relation that was sustained by him, by virtue of the atonement, before he personally sinned, and that is sustained by every infant until it is severed by personal transgression. This relation is secured by and in Christ, who, though he “knew no sin, was made sin for us; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him,” and who, therefore, is called “*The Lord our righteousness.*” Circumcision was a seal of this righteousness, a sign of this relation to God in Christ, and as such was placed upon infants, that they might be recognized as entitled, by reason of this relation, to the temporal blessings promised in the covenant, and to the heavenly inheritance of which the earthly Canaan was a type.

But circumcision was not only a seal of righteousness; it was also a pledge upon the part of the circumcised, that they would keep the law of God, a sacred obligation, binding them to faithfulness in the service of God. The very fact that God, upon the basis of the atonement—the only ground

upon which he can be just and the justifier of them that believe — justified them, counted them righteous—brought them under obligation to serve him in the beauty of holiness, to do the whole will of God; and circumcision was a formal recognition of, and a solemn promise to discharge this obligation. One of the duties which, by entering into the covenant and taking its seal, they pledged themselves to discharge was, to place the seal of the covenant upon their infant children and train them to the observance of its requirements. So, if baptism is in any sense a covenant, binding those who receive it to the service of God—whether it come in the room of circumcision or not—it is binding to the whole extent of man's duty; and if it is his duty to train up his children "in the nurture and admonition of the Lord," it is because God has claims upon them (the children) which can not be unless they are embraced in the atonement; and as the covenant is based upon the atonement and binding upon those only whom it embraces, it follows that children are of the covenant and en-

titled to its seal, and that the parent, by the very terms of the covenant, pledges himself in the act of receiving baptism to have his children baptized, and to train them to the observance of all its requirements.

CHAPTER V.

ISRAEL A TYPE OF THE CHURCH.

IN the providence of God the descendants of Abraham (Israel) were permitted to be held in bondage for many years by the Egyptians. In their bondage, their deliverance, their journeyings through the wilderness to the promised Canaan, their trials, etc., they are recognized by all parties as a type of the Church under what is called the Christian dispensation. We believe they were more—that they were the Church of God, “the Church in the wilderness.” But, admitting that they were *only a type* of the Church, infants were a part of that type, and the antitype, the Church under the Christian dispensation, must, if it answer the type, have infants in it also. Let us for a few moments consider the analogies between the two: Israel in bondage in Egypt represents man’s bondage to sin.

Their helplessness, their inability to break the yoke and deliver themselves from that bondage, represents the utter helplessness of man, his inability to save himself from sin. Moses, who under God—being sent of him for this purpose—became their deliverer and leader, was a type of Christ, the Son of God, who was sent into the world to deliver man from the power and dominion of sin, and to lead him to the Canaan of rest in heaven, typified by the earthly Canaan. Moses was born in Egypt, born of a woman who was in bondage to Egypt, but was never, personally, a slave; never served under the task-masters. So Jesus Christ was born of a woman, who, in common with her race, had fallen under sin—“made of a woman, made under the law”—but never personally transgressed the law. Moses *chose* to suffer affliction with the people of God. Jesus Christ “*took* upon him the seed of Abraham.” Moses, when he was sent to deliver Israel, wrought miracles to prove that he acted under divine authority. So also did Jesus, and appealed to his works in proof of his claim to being the Son of

God. Moses was sent to provide a way of escape, furnish proof that such provision was made, and proffer guidance to all who would submit to his leadership, but had no authority to compel submission. Jesus also provides a way of escape from sin, and proffers the "light of life" to all who will follow him, but does not compel discipleship. Moses would not consent to go without the children, but contended for all, young and old, sons and daughters, until Pharaoh said: "Let your little ones also go with you." Christ, when those who brought little children to him, were rebuked, said: "Suffer the little children to come unto me and forbid them not, for of such is the kingdom of heaven." In both cases the *will* of adults was consulted, and *evidence* brought to bear upon their minds to produce conviction of truth, while *motives* were offered to induce decision and action; but infants were *unconditionally* provided for, and their parents, their heaven-appointed guardians, were to carry them.

Suppose the heads of families had left it optional with their infants whether they

would go or not, and utterly refused to take their "little ones," assigning as a reason that it would be "taking away their liberties," that they might not, when old enough to choose for themselves, want to go; or, if they did, would choose another *mode* of going, what would be thought of them? Or, suppose a part of them had chosen thus to act, and gravely charged those who took their children with them with transgressing the order of God, and of Moses, their leader, with "kidnapping babies in their cradles," etc., saying there was no command to *take* any one, but that they were to *go*, which implies volition, voluntary action! Who would covet or envy such a historical record?

Such a course, on the part of the Israelites, supposing it to have been practicable, would have effectually defeated the purpose of the Almighty and kept the seed of Abraham in perpetual bondage to the Egyptians. In like manner, the doctrine and practice of anti-pedobaptists antagonize the spread of scriptural holiness and forbid the universal reign of Christ on

earth. As long as their theory and practice prevail, there will, of necessity, be hearts unsubdued to Christ, and persons out of his church or kingdom. Again, the children of Israel were not out of the power of Egypt's king—were not separated from Egypt—until they crossed the Red Sea and “were all *baptized* unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea.” “Then sang Moses and the children of Israel this song unto the Lord, saying, I will sing unto the Lord, for he hath triumphed gloriously: the horse and his rider hath he thrown into the sea. The Lord is my strength, and he is become my salvation.” Mark the successive steps in their history: They witness the miraculous works of Moses, are convinced that he is sent of God, resolve to accept his leadership and depart from Egypt, gather up their effects and prepare for the journey, take their “little ones” and start for the promised Canaan; but there are no signs of joy and gladness until the water of *baptism* is “poured out” upon them, and they stand upon the other side of the boundary line which separates between them and the

place of their former bondage! Then the shout of triumph is raised, and the joy welling up in their hearts seeks expression in a song of praise to their deliverer. Is there no significance in all this? Is there nothing answering to it in the experience of Christians, and in the Church of which Israel was a type? In the very beginning of the gospel dispensation, on the day of Pentecost, when the disciples "were all with one accord in one place," and the promised "power from on high" was given to qualify them to preach the gospel "in all the world" and "to every creature," "Peter, standing up with the eleven, began by showing the fulfillment of prophecy in Jesus Christ and the pouring out of the Spirit secured by Him." He showed "that God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye (the Jews) have crucified, both Lord and Christ. Now when they heard this, they were pricked in their heart, and said unto Peter and the rest of the apostles, Men and brethren, what shall we do? Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus

Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost. For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call. And with many other words did he testify and exhort, saying, save yourselves from this untoward generation. Then they that gladly received the word were baptized, and they, continuing daily with one accord in the temple and in breaking bread from house to house, did eat their meat with gladness and singleness of heart, *praising* God and having favor with all the people. And the Lord added to the Church daily such as should be saved."

Baptism is the visible sign by which the people of God are separated from the world and recognized as the followers of Jesus; and having determined to follow him through evil as well as good report, and having taken—with their children—the badge of discipleship, in baptism, they may well rejoice in their Leader and sing praises to their Deliverer. Israel was a type of the Church; *all* the Israelites were *baptized*,

“little ones” and all; and unless the Church is composed in part of children, the type has failed in a very important feature to find in her its antitype. The opposers of infant baptism demand a positive precept or an unmistakable example for the practice. Here we present both: The Israelites were all baptized—men, women and children, and the apostle tells us that “all these things happened unto them for examples, and they are written for our admonition;” which is equivalent to saying, follow the example in all that was right, and be warned against their wrongs by the consequences which they suffered. It is objected, however, that children are not mentioned in connection with the baptism, and that in the same way it may be proved that their cattle, bells, etc., were baptized, and that, therefore, we must practice the baptism of such things! This is too evidently a *dodge* to deserve attention, and would not be noticed here but for the fact that it is gravely urged even by learned opposers of infant baptism. As to the first part, it would be a sufficient reply to say, neither

are *women* mentioned in connection with the baptism as named by the apostle; yet no one doubts that they were baptized. But, in addition, we remark that children, "little ones," are specifically mentioned in the transaction referred to by the apostle, and especially cared for throughout the entire history. As to the baptism of cattle, etc., it is wholly gratuitous, having neither reason nor revelation to support it. They are not alluded to by the apostle, and not even mentioned in the history as having crossed the Red Sea! "The children of Israel (were not *infants* children of Israel?) went into the midst of the sea *upon the dry ground*" — "walked upon dry land in the midst of the sea" and so passed over; but how the cattle were crossed we are not informed. We certainly can not suppose that they were mixed up promiscuously with the women and children. The apostle is talking about human beings, and says they "were all baptized;" and to base an objection upon a gratuitous guess about something not mentioned, is too childish and frivolous to deserve serious notice. It

only shows the *weakness* of the cause it is intended to support.

They did take their cattle, however, and this fact is not without its significance, especially when we consider the *reason* assigned for taking them: "And Moses said, Thou must give us also sacrifice and burnt-offerings, that we may sacrifice unto the Lord our God. Our cattle also shall go with us, there shall not a hoof be left behind; *for thereof must we take to serve the Lord our God*; and we know not with what we must serve the Lord, until we come thither." (Exod. x. 25, 26.) He does not mention their personal, temporal wants; does not argue that they will need food and must take their flocks along to supply themselves with meat; but, confident that if they serve God he will provide all things necessary, he is only concerned to provide for that service. This principle is recognized also by Jesus, his Antitype, when he says: "Seek ye first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you;" and in apostolic times, when a man joined the Church, he

not only took his family—his household—with him, but his goods also: “Neither said any of them that aught of the things which he possessed was his own; but they had all things common.” “Neither was there any among them that lacked;” for distribution was made unto every man according as he had need, thus keeping up the *family* idea with which the Church was organized in the family of Abraham, with whom the “everlasting covenant” was made. The same principle should be recognized and practiced upon still, by all followers of Christ, all members of the “household of faith.” No Christian has a right to hold *as his own* the means with which God has blessed him, when any of the children of “Our Father” are in *need*. “Distribution to the necessity of saints” is one of the duties prescribed by St. Paul for those who would “be not conformed to this world;” based, too, upon the fact that “we, being many, are one body in Christ, and every one members one of another.” Thus we see that, if the objector intends to deride the idea of taking property into the Church,

he opposes the plain teaching of the Bible. The fact is, when a man gives himself to the service of God, he ought, and *must*, if he would serve him successfully, consecrate all that he controls to that service; and all such, if personally interested in the salvation provided in Christ, should be sealed by the appointed ordinance of God. If, therefore, infants are personally interested in the atonement—and, if not, on what ground can they be saved?—and parents have the right to control them, it can not be wrong to exercise that right in controlling them for God and their own good. And as baptism symbolizes the purifying influence of the Holy Ghost, which was secured by the atonement—without which no human being can be saved, and obligates all who receive it to “walk after the Spirit and not after the flesh,” it can not be wrong in the parents to recognize, in the use of the symbol, the child’s right and title to this cleansing, and the agent who performs it; nor to formally obligate him to render that service which is at once his duty and his interest. Admit that infants have an interest in the

atonement, that they are saved through the merits of Christ's death, and that parents have the right to control them, and it is impossible to prove that it is wrong to have them baptized—nay, it is impossible to avoid the conclusion that it is right.

But it is not only the *right* of the parent to control the child, but it is his absolute *duty* to do so; and the reason assigned by God himself for selecting Abraham through whom to bless the world is, "For I know him, that he will *command* his children and household after him, and they shall keep the way of the Lord, to do justice and judgment; that the Lord may bring upon Abraham that which he hath spoken of him." Here we have not only a recognition of Abraham's duty to *command* his children, and the fact that the Lord knew that he would discharge that duty, but much more: It is clearly intimated that the fulfillment of the promise in blessing "all the nations of the earth," depended upon it. "That the Lord *may* bring upon Abraham that which he hath spoken of him," implies that it is a condition of and

means to accomplish the end. It was not enough that Abraham should "keep the way of the Lord," his children must do the same; and in order to this they must receive the sign of circumcision," a seal of the righteousness of faith," and be commanded after their father "to do justice and judgment." Nor was this duty, to command the children, limited to Abraham and intended to cease with him; it was to be perpetuated through all succeeding generations, and for the same reason, "that the Lord may bring upon Abraham that which he hath spoken of him." That all parents were not as faithful as Abraham, may be, and doubtless is, true; but that the duty was equally binding upon all, is what none can reasonably doubt. The whole history of the Jewish people from Abraham to the coming of Christ furnishes proof of the fact, and we need not consume time in enumerating arguments in its support.

Besides, the very nature of the relations existing between God and his people, and between parents and children, make it a necessity.

The relation sustained by Abraham to God was the same that has been, is, and must be sustained by Christians in every period of the world's history through all generations of men; and the relation of parents to children is, and must continue to be, the same while human nature remains unchanged; and as the duty of parents to children grows out of these relations, it must of necessity continue the same. If, therefore, it was the duty of Abraham to place the "seal of the righteousness of faith" upon his children, and to "command" them "after him" in the service of God, it follows, unavoidably, that it is the duty of all parents to do the same. And if it be admitted that baptism is, as circumcision was, "a seal of the righteousness of faith," that it is a symbol or sign of the purifying influence of the Holy Spirit, which is the circumcision of the heart, by the irresistible force of logic the right and duty of infant baptism are established.

But we were considering Israel as only a type of the Church; and in so doing the argument loses none of its force. For if

the Jews be regarded simply as a nation, and circumcision as a national seal, and sign and pledge of temporal blessings, sealing in covenant the promise to the earthly Canaan; still, if they, in that capacity, were a type of the Church, and the land of Canaan a type of the heavenly Canaan, the rest that remaineth to the people of God, children constituted a part of the nation, were interested in the promise, received the seal of the covenant and entered into the promised Canaan; and if the Church be the antitype, the membership of children must of necessity be recognized—which can be done only in baptism. It is admitted by all that children dying in infancy do enter upon the promised Canaan—are saved in heaven; but unless they are embraced in the promise, this can not be; and if embraced in the promise, they are entitled to the seal of the covenant securing that promise, and it is absolute injustice to deprive them of it, or withhold it from them.

Has the promise of God failed? or has it been so fully accomplished that there is no

longer any promise? That it has failed, none will be so bold as to assert; and if it has ceased because fully accomplished, on what basis and by what authority is salvation offered to sinners? It was upon the basis of this promise and by the authority of God, that Peter, after the coming of Christ, the promised seed in whom all the nations of the earth were to be blessed, offered the blessing of salvation "first to the Jews." (Acts iii. 19-26.) That it had direct reference to the pardon of sin is clearly stated. "Repent ye, therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out." That the blotting out of sins was through Jesus Christ none will deny; that he was not another or a new Savior, is proved (if proof were needed) by the declaration of Peter that, "he shall send Jesus Christ, which *before* was preached unto you;" and that the doctrine preached by Peter was not a new doctrine, is seen in the fact that it was that "which God hath spoken by the mouth of all his holy prophets since the world began." Hence the apostle says: "Ye are the children of the

prophets and of the covenant which God made with our fathers, saying unto Abraham, And in thy seed shall all the kindreds of the earth be blessed. Unto you first, God having raised up his Son Jesus, sent him to bless you in turning away every one of you from his iniquities." Here we have the original promise and the Abrahamic covenant recognized as still in full force *after* the commission was given to "go teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost," and *after* the pentecostal baptism, by which they were qualified for the work; and that, too, without the slightest intimation that there was to be a change in the law of membership—that infants were no longer to be recognized as among the Israel of God. Or, if you please, that the Anti-type in this respect was not to answer to the type.

Look at this for a moment: When God made promise to Abraham and entered into covenant with him, saying, "for a father of many nations have I made thee," he appointed a seal to that covenant, and gave

special directions that it should be placed upon children. The practice then inaugurated was kept up by the covenant people of God until the manifestation of the promised seed, in whom all the nations were to be blessed, and the commission to preach the gospel in all the world and to every creature, was given in fulfillment of that promise and while the covenant, with its seal, was still in full force. Not only so, but the commission is given in almost the precise language of the covenant-promise: "Go teach *all nations*," and must have been understood to embrace children; for there had been no intimation given that they were to be excluded. On the contrary, Christ had said: "Suffer the little children to come unto me, and forbid them not, for of such is the kingdom of heaven." Evidently the kingdom which he came to establish, and of which he declared himself the King.

To understand the teaching of the Scriptures, we must take them in their connection; and to understand the plan of salvation, we must trace its development as it is

gradually unfolded in the divinely inspired oracles of God; and to do this, we must take the *whole* of these oracles, the sum of which constitutes the Bible, Old and New Testaments. These contain the word of God and are a unit. They can not be in conflict, the one with the other. The New Testament can not teach anything in conflict with the Old. Whether, therefore, we regard the Israel of the Old Testament as the Church of God, or only as a type of the Church, the results are the same. If, as the Church, infant membership is beyond question; and if, as a type of the Church, the conclusion, that infants have a right to membership, is irresistible; if Israel, as a kingdom, was a type of the "kingdom of God," we are not only compelled by the force of logic to accept the membership of infants, but we have the authority of the King himself for saying: "Of such is the kingdom of God."

CHAPTER VI.

PROPHECY.

THE law of circumcision was in force until the day of Jesus Christ, and, as long as in force, was, by divine authority, binding upon infants. Under it the plan of salvation, announced in the original promise and renewed to Abraham in the covenant which was "confirmed of God in Christ," was unfolded and developed. All the typical sacrifices and services of the Old Testament, as well as all its prophecies, were made, performed and uttered under the seal of circumcision. It was, as we have seen, spiritual in its significance, pointing to Christ who should be cut off for the people, and binding all who were circumcised to the love and service of God. Considering Israel as a type of the Church under what is called the Christian dispensation, we

found nothing in their history from which it could be inferred that infants were, after the coming of Christ, to be no longer recognized as among the people of God—no longer embraced in the covenant. We now inquire, is there anything in the utterances of the prophets foretelling such a change?

This may seem, to some, a strange way of approaching the subject. They may be disposed to ask, "Why not inquire for prophecies specifically pointing out—foretelling—the church membership of infants under the Christian dispensation?" We answer, for the very good reason that prophecy (in the sense in which the word is here used) is the foretelling of *future* events, and not the relation of *facts already existing*. If the covenant-relation of children to God had been a thing unknown in the days of the prophets, and God had intended to inaugurate it at or after the coming of Christ, and place the seal of the covenant upon them, it is reasonable to suppose that he would have intimated it to his prophets, and through them to the people. Had such been the case, in the absence of all prophecy, in type

or otherwise, nothing short of a specific enactment upon the part of Jesus Christ, either in person or through his inspired apostles, could warrant or justify the practice of infant membership.

The Israelites were the recognized people of God; his peculiar people, raised up by him from Abraham, with whom he made and confirmed the covenant which was to be an *everlasting* covenant, and which contained the promise of blessings to all nations. They had the seal of the covenant upon them—placed upon them in infancy. The very name they bore was memorial and significant. It was commemorative of the struggle and triumph of their father Jacob, who wrestled with the angel and prevailed with God: "Thy name shall be called no more Jacob, but Israel: for as a prince thou hast power with God and with men, and hast prevailed." It means a prince of God, and signifies that prevalence in prayer which characterizes the true people of God. The name is worthy of its origin, though not all who wear it are worthy of the name; for they are not all

Israel who are of Israel. The seal of the covenant, which was the means of perpetuating this name, and compliance with the terms of which would ever secure the character which the name implies, was also significant of purity of character, being a sign of the cutting off of their sins. Infants were embraced in the covenant, inherited the name, and were sealed with the sign. Surely, if God intended to introduce a new order of things and exclude all infants from the "everlasting covenant," no longer allowing the seal of the covenant to be placed upon them, we may expect to find some intimation of such purpose, either in the history of his dealings with his people, or in the prophecies which look to the accomplishment of his purpose. We have failed to find it in the history. On the contrary, we have found the interests of the "little ones" carefully guarded and their identity with the people of God recognized at every step. Shall we be more successful in searching the prophets? We shall see. We do not say that there is nothing in prophecy relating to the membership of children;

but only that their covenant relation being a recognized fact among the Jews, we are not to expect *such* prophecy as would be necessary with reference to the introduction of something new; and that the *non-recognition* of children, if practiced by divine authority, is certainly peculiar to the New Testament dispensation, and must, therefore, look for support to some special prophecy, which can not otherwise be fulfilled, and which is sanctioned by the teachings and practice of Christ and his apostles. The best evidence that no such prophecy exists is found in the fact that no opposer of the right of infants to church membership and baptism has ever been able to point it out, nor even professed to have found it. Why is this? Is it because children are wholly ignored by the prophets? not mentioned by them at all? Certainly not. In the prophecies, as in the history, children are included in the general term, Israel; and it is not even possible that they can be understood otherwise. They prophesied, it is true, of a coming Deliverer; but not as though he did not

already exist, or was not already present with his people.

His *coming* presupposed his existence, and the prophecy itself evidenced his presence. Indeed, it is utterly impossible to account for or believe in the truth of prophecy, without admitting the divine presence. If it be said that it was the presence of the Spirit, and not of Christ, we answer: It was the presence of Christ as certainly as, and in the same sense that Christ is present with his people now. When we read the declaration of Christ, "Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world," we do not suppose that he means his manifested, bodily, physical presence; but only that he is spiritually present. If the promise of the divine presence is to be confined to the *bodily* presence of the *manifested* Son of God, then it must be confined to a *very few*, and for a *very short time*. To speak of prophecy—as we fear is too often done—as though it had *exclusive* reference to the period of Christ's incarnation, is to do great violence to the truth, and to render it im-

possible ever to have a proper understanding of its teachings.

The promise renewed to Abraham and secured in the covenant, was itself a prophecy foretelling future events, including the incarnation of Christ; but certainly it did not have *exclusive* reference to the birth of Jesus, his life, death and resurrection. It included, and of necessity, *present* blessings and a continuation of them to the coming of the promised seed, and on to the perfect accomplishment of all that was contained in the promise. These present blessings, spiritual and temporal, were not only necessary to the accomplishment of the prophecy looking to the birth of Jesus, his death etc.; but were also the results of the one atoning sacrifice which he offered for the sins of the whole world. He was "as a Lamb slain from the foundation of the world." Prophecy itself was one of these resultant blessings, and is to-day the strongest evidence that the promised Redeemer was himself the Promiser, and that he *was present fulfilling his promise*. Prophecy is pre-recorded history; *i. e.*, history recorded

before it is enacted or transpires, and is constantly changing into history as it is being fulfilled. That which was prophecy becomes history, without in the least affecting the facts, which belong equally to both.

It is not, however, necessary that *all* the facts of history be foretold in detail to constitute prophecy. This would be, unless the free agency of man were interfered with, to defeat itself; in other words, to destroy prophecy where the agency of man is involved in its fulfillment. We have said that, in prophecy, as in history, infants are embraced in the general term, Israel, or whatever other term may be used to designate the people of God. Take one example: In the fifteenth chapter of Genesis it is prophesied that the "seed" of Abraham shall serve in bondage four hundred years, "and afterward *shall come out* with great substance." Here not a word is said of infants, except as they are embraced in the term "seed." When this prophecy becomes history, it is seed: "Now the sojourning of the children of Israel, who dwelt in Egypt, was four hundred and thirty years. And it

came to pass, at the end of four hundred and thirty years, that all the hosts of the Lord went out from the land of Egypt." (Exod. xii. 40, 41.) The "seed" of Abraham, "the children of Israel" and "the hosts of the Lord" are then, in these passages, synonymous terms—what one means, they all mean. Do they include infants? Every one knows that but for infants the prophecy never could have been fulfilled.

Besides, in the detailed account of the deliverance of the "children of Israel," the "little ones" are specifically mentioned, as we have elsewhere shown, and the fact stated that the seal of the covenant which constituted them the people of God was placed upon them. Not only are infants included in these general terms, but *all* prophecy, of a general character, looking to the establishment of a peculiar people unto the Lord, separated from the rest of mankind, is couched in language of a similar character: "Israel," "the house of Israel," "my people," "my flock," "my sheep," are all terms used to distinguish the covenant people of God—always refer-

ring to the Abrahamic covenant—from the rest of mankind, and in the Old Testament, as the history shows, always including infants. The majority of them—nearly all—are in the New Testament applied to the Church, and in such connections as to show beyond all doubt that the prophets applied them to the same. Now, if the Lord, through his inspired prophets, used such terms to distinguish his peculiar people as by his own showing included infants, and extended their use and application to the Church after the resurrection and ascension of Jesus Christ, without any intimation that they should be *excluded*, is not the conclusion irresistible that they *are included* still?

But the evidence is, if possible, more conclusive than this. Prophecy does not necessarily detail all the facts of history; but history, to be the fulfillment of prophecy, *must* contain *all* that is specified in prophecy. The Lord, through Jeremiah, speaking of the time when Israel “shall serve the Lord their God, and David their King, whom I will raise up unto them,” says:

“Their children also shall be as aforetime, and their congregation shall be established before me.” (Jer. xxx. 20.) That “David their King, whom the Lord would “raise up,” and whom Israel was to serve, is Jesus Christ, will not be questioned. Now, children “aforetime” were in covenant relation with God, and numbered among his people, and the prophecy specifies that they shall be “as aforetime.” The history therefore *must* show the recognition of the same relation, which can be done only in baptism.

Again, “Behold, the Lord God will come with a strong hand, and his arm shall rule for him: behold, his reward is with him, and his work before him. He shall feed his flock like a shepherd: he shall gather the lambs with his arm, and carry them in his bosom, and shall gently lead them that are with young.” (Isaiah xl. 10, 11.) In this passage—which no one doubts refers to Jesus—the Savior is spoken of as a shepherd, and his people as his flock. This flock is composed in part of lambs, which must mean children, little children, for they

are gathered with the arms and carried in the bosom. If the flock is not the Church, we would thank some one to tell us what it is; or, what is the same, if the Church is not the flock of Christ, where is his flock? of what is it composed? As if to show the fulfillment of this prophecy, Jesus called himself the true shepherd, took little children in his arms and blessed them, and said, "of such is the kingdom of God."

"True," says the objector; "but he did not baptize them." No; Jesus did not baptize them." No; Jesus did not baptize any, infants nor adults. But can any man believe that the apostles would have refused to baptize an adult, if Jesus had told them he had been converted and become as a little child? "Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven." (Matt. xviii. 3.) It is not necessary that it should be stated that they were baptized. If it be shown that they were in the Church, it is certain that they were baptized; if, as all anti-pedobaptists teach, baptism is essential to church-membership. It is said, Acts ii. 47: "And

the Lord added to the Church daily such as should be saved." It is not said, they were baptized; yet no one doubts that they were. Nor does anybody believe that the Lord baptized them, except with the Holy Ghost, though he added them to the Church. The prophet plainly teaches that infants are a part of the flock of Christ; and Jesus says they are of the kingdom; now, unless the flock and kingdom are something outside of and distinct from the Church, they are certainly in the Church; and, if in the Church, are baptized or ought to be.

When special reference is made by the prophets to the bringing in of the Gentiles, they do not forget the "little ones:" "Thus saith the Lord God, Behold, I will lift up mine hand to the Gentiles, and set up my standard to the people: and they shall *bring thy sons in their arms*, and thy daughters shall be carried upon their shoulders." (Isaiah xlix. 22.) Let the reader try to conceive of this prophecy as being fulfilled in bringing the Gentiles into the Church, with the idea that children are not to be admitted, and see what he will make of it!

Or, if he does not think that it means that, let him try to find its fulfillment, or show how it *can* be fulfilled, consistently with such an idea.

Again, "Awake, O sword, against my Shepherd, and against the man that is my fellow, saith the Lord of hosts: smite the Shepherd, and the sheep shall be scattered: and I will turn mine hand upon the little ones." (Zech. xiii. 7.) Here the same Great Shepherd, who commanded the seal of the covenant to be placed upon infants, when the promise was given to Abraham, shows his tender care for the "little ones;" now that, being manifested in the flesh, he is smitten and his sheep are scattered. Let it be remembered that these prophecies were uttered by men brought up in the Church, and under the inspiration of the Spirit of God, who had taught them to command their children after them in his service, that it was by means of this special training of children, from their earliest infancy, under the seal of the covenant, that bound them to that service that the prophecies were to be fulfilled and the promise verified; that

the presence of the promised One was necessary to the very existence of the prophecy, and at every stage of its development till fully accomplished; that the grand design was, the glory of God in the salvation of the people; and that salvation was as real then as now, and by the same Savior and to the same class of persons, and the membership of infants will follow as certainly and as necessarily as light accompanies the rising of the sun.

CHAPTER VII.

THE CHURCH—WHEN ORGANIZED?

THE opposers of infant baptism find it necessary to deny the existence of the Church previous to the coming of Jesus Christ. The reason is obvious: If the Church existed before and *continued* after the coming and crucifixion of the Savior, it being undeniable that infants were recognized as members before and up to the time of Jesus, they must find a positive law in the New Testament excluding them. On the other hand, assuming that the Church *began* to exist sometime during the life of Jesus or in apostolic days, they demand a positive command in the New Testament for receiving and baptizing them. There seems to be a vague, undefined idea in their minds to the effect that God used the patriarchs and prophets—the whole Israel of

God from Abraham to the coming of Christ—to develop a plan of salvation and furnish a basis for the organization of a Church for the benefit of those who should live after the crucifixion, without taking them into any sacred relation to himself, or appointing any means by which they might recognize themselves and each other as the people of God and pledge themselves to faithfulness in his service. The idea is absurd, and the formal utterance of it would be an insult to God and a reflection upon the common sense of man. They dare not admit it to themselves; and yet it underlies their every argument (?) against the right of infants to baptism. Think of it: They will allow God to select a man from whom to raise up a family, a nation; and to deposit with him the promise of blessings to all (other) nations; enter into covenant with him, conditioning the fulfillment of the promise on the faith and faithfulness of him and of his descendants—to which conditions they pledge themselves in accepting the seal of the covenant—yet will not allow them to be recognized as the people of God,

in a *spiritual* sense, because, forsooth, he has commanded the seal of the covenant to be placed upon infants! He can claim them as his, call them "My people;" but he must be careful not to *mean* that they are *really* his in any such sense as would constitute them the saved of the Lord, or make the impression that they are his Church; for that would be to recognize the wicked little infants as in his gracious favor and heirs to a heavenly inheritance! He may protect them against their enemies, supply their *temporal* wants, follow them with his presence, require them to love Him with all their heart, soul, mind and strength, and punish them for failure to meet the requirement; but must not recognize them as his *spiritual* people; for that would be to constitute them the Church and recognize the "little depraved vipers" (infants) as members! In a word, he may do with them and for them any and everything he may please, PROVIDED he does not make of them a Church; for it will never do to have a Church with babies in it!

However unreasonable all this is, it is

necessary to justify the exclusion of infants from the Church now, and this *necessity* is a sufficient *reason* for the belief, as infants *must* be kept out! And yet, if it were admitted, or could be proved, that the Church began to exist in apostolic days, the fact would still remain that that which was confessedly a *type* of the Church was composed, in part, of infants; and therefore the Church, the antitype, if it answer to the type, must include infants also. Thus we see that antipedobaptists are bound, in reason and justice, to show either a positive law in the New Testament excluding them, or that the organization of the Church was such as to *necessitate* their exclusion. But what is the truth in the case? This is all we are concerned to know. Either there was or there was not a Church in the world previous to the coming of Christ in the flesh. If there was, then either that Church was destroyed or it was perpetuated and exists at the present day. If there was not, then either it *began* to exist some time after the birth of Jesus or it does not yet exist. But it is admitted by all that God has a Church in the

world now. It follows, therefore, either that it existed *before*, or that it began to exist *after* the birth of Jesus. If it began after, then God was four thousand years without a Church in the world. This is unreasonable; nevertheless, if the Bible so teach, we will accept it. We inquire, then, what does the Bible teach? When does it say the Church began? or does it say at all?

Before these questions can be answered, it will be necessary to determine what the Church is. The Church is the body of Christ (Eph. i. 22, 23); *i. e.*, they who stand in a saved relation to God in Christ constitute the Church; and a visible recognition of this relation, by the use of the sacramental sign of it, constitutes the visible Church, about which we are now speaking. If this definition be accepted, the controversy is at an end; unless it be contended that before the coming of the Son of God in the flesh men were saved independently of Christ and the atonement; for nothing is more certain than that men were saved and that this fact was signified by the sacrament appointed of God, *viz.*: Circumcision,

which was a sign and seal of the righteousness of faith. And it is equally certain that this sign and seal was placed upon infants.

But leaving the reader to define the Church, as, guided by the Word of God, he may think proper, we would ask him, when he has defined it to his own satisfaction, to turn to the Bible and point out the chapter and verse that tell where and when the Church was organized—began to exist. If the Church is peculiarly a New Testament institution, it certainly had its *origin* in the days of Jesus, or during apostolic times; and, if so, it ought to be an easy matter to find where and when it was instituted, organized, or in some way *began to be*. But is it so? Can any man point to a single passage in the New Testament from which it can reasonably, nay, even possibly, be *inferred* that the Church was instituted—brought into existence anywhere or at any time after the birth of Jesus? Can any point to a period in the life of Jesus, before which it is certain, or even probable, that the Church did not exist?

There is but *one* passage from which, with

any degree of plausibility, such an inference can be drawn, viz.: Matt. xvi. 18—"Thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my Church." Because the Savior here says, "I *will* build my Church," it is concluded by some that there was no Church yet in existence. If the word build meant to *originate* or *begin to make* something, and meant nothing else, this conclusion would be legitimate. But if this were the case, our difficulties would be increased, not diminished. Indeed, with such a definition of the word it would be impossible to understand many passages of Scripture. Take an example: "Then had the churches rest throughout all Judea, and Galilee, and Samaria, and were edified (built—the same word), and walking in the fear of the Lord, and in the comfort of the Holy Ghost, were multiplied." (Acts ix. 29.) Here "the churches had rest," and were afterward builded. Were they *made*, originated, after they had rest? Again, in 1 Cor. xiv., 3d, 4th and 5th verses, the same word occurs four times, and in every instance is rendered edify. To render it build, with the idea of

originating, would destroy the sense. Let us try it: "But he that prophesieth, speaketh unto men to edification" (to building). "He that speaketh in an unknown tongue, edifieth (buildeth) himself." Is he self-created? and to create self, does he speak before he has an existence? But he that prophesieth, edifieth (buildeth) the Church"—just what Christ said he would do. Was it to originate something? In these and many other passages where the word occurs, it not only does not mean to originate, but necessarily implies that the thing to be built already exists. To build, according to the New Testament use of the word, is to establish, to edify, to embellish, to amplify, etc.; and this is what the Savior said he would do, what he has done, and is doing to his Church.

Supposing him to mean, when he said, "I will build my Church," that he would institute, organize a Church—something that then and previous to that time had no existence—we ask, when and where did the Church begin? A short time after this—only a few days—we find him instructing

his disciples in the case of an offending brother, who would not hear private reproof, to "tell it unto the church." Here he speaks of the Church, not as something to be originated hereafter, but as already existing. When and where was it instituted? These are the only two places in all the four gospels where the word church is used. Is it probable, or even possible, that the thing designated by it was spoken of but *twice* by Jesus, and *never* by the evangelists in all their intercourse with him, as recorded in the gospels? Who can believe it? And yet it is even so, unless it was called by some other name. "The kingdom of heaven" is frequently spoken of, and, in parables, likened unto many things; but if the kingdom of heaven is not the Church, but something distinct from it, what and where is the kingdom of heaven? And if the Church and kingdom are one, it existed and was talked much about before the Savior said, "I will build my Church," and was composed in part of little children. Be this as it may, it is absolutely certain that the gospels give no

account of the *beginning* of the Church, neither by that name nor by any other; neither as having been organized nor as something yet to be instituted.

The next occurrence of the word church is in the second of Acts, where it is said, "The Lord *added* to the church daily such as should be saved," without one word about its organization, or a hint as to when it began to be. So in Acts v. 11, it is said, "Great fear came upon all the church," but no allusion is made to the time of its origin. If it began after Christ said, "I will build my Church," and its organization was such as to exclude infants, it is passing strange that no allusion is made to these important facts in its history.

The word *church* is next used by Stephen in his speech before the council to which he was accused of speaking "blasphemous words against Moses and against God," recorded in Acts vii. In his defense he begins with the appearance of "the God of glory unto our father Abraham," and recounts in brief the history of the promised seed under "the covenant of circumcision,"

through the patriarchs and Joseph to their bondage in Egypt; their deliverance by the hand of God through the leadership of Moses; their journeyings through the wilderness, and on to the building of the temple by Solomon. He then tells them, "The Most High dwelleth not in temples made with hands; as saith the prophet, Heaven is my throne, and earth is my footstool;" intending, no doubt, to remind them that, while houses are built for the worship of God, his dwelling-place is the heart of the worshiper. Because they had failed to recognize this truth, he charges them with being "stiffnecked and *uncircumcised* in heart and ears," and with "resisting the Holy Ghost;" and, as the result, that they had "been the betrayers and murderers of the Just One." It was not for want of instruction, but because, having "received the law by the disposition of angels," they "had not kept it." It was in this speech that, referring to Moses, Stephen said: "This is he that was in the *church* in the wilderness." (Acts vii. 28.) Read the whole chapter.

We have been thus particular because we

wish to call the reader's attention to the circumstances under which the word was used, and the application that was made of it. We do this because while the opposers of infant membership can see the Church in every other place where the word is applied to the people of God, in this they can see only a congregation—a political assembly. The reason is obvious: There were children in that assembly; and, though they were "little ones," the eye of prejudice magnifies them to such huge proportions as to obscure, to obliterate the Church of God! Let us note the circumstances surrounding Stephen. He was a disciple of Jesus, recognizing him as the Christ, the Messiah of the Old Testament Scriptures. He believed the Scriptures, and *therefore* believed in Jesus. He was a Jew; he had not changed his religion, but only kept pace with the truth. The Scriptures promised a Redeemer; the promise was fulfilled in the person of Jesus, and he accepted him. He realized the promise, but did not abandon the faith. Many of his brethren, the Jews, who had cherished the same hope, inspired

by faith in the same promise, rejected Jesus, the promised Redeemer, and, in so doing, abandoned the faith and gave up the religion of the Scriptures. Among them were most of the leaders, prominent men, officers in the church. The council before which he was brought for trial was composed of these. It was a church trial. He was charged with "blasphemy against Moses and against God." If the charges had been sustained, he would, and ought to, have been expelled. But we are told that "they suborned men, * * * and set up false witnesses" against him, "which said, This man ceaseth not to speak blasphemous words against this holy place and the law: For we have heard him say, that this Jesus of Nazareth shall destroy this place, and shall *change the customs* which Moses delivered unto us." The issue was fairly made. Stephen represented one party; the council and his accusers the other. If Jesus was not the Christ, but an impostor seeking to *change* the religion of God's people, then Stephen and his party, in becoming his disciples, abandoned their religion, and ought

to have been excommunicated. But if he was the Christ, fulfilling prophecy, and not changing their religion, the council and Stephen's accusers, with all the rejecters of Jesus, were apostates from the true faith, and no longer the proper representatives of the Church. In short, the covenant people of God—the Church—were divided on the question of the Messiahship of Jesus. Both parties could not be right—one must. Jesus was the Christ, or he was not. If he was, the Scriptures taught that he was; and they who believed in him *continued* to believe the Scriptures, and, in accepting him, followed their teachings—*continued* in their religion, and remained the people of God, the Church. Stephen recognized this fact, and appealed to the Scriptures, recognized by both parties as authority, in his defense. He began with the promise given in covenant to Abraham, and gave a synoptical history of its development to the time of David and Solomon, ending with the building of the temple; but dwelt particularly on Moses, against whom and God he was charged with speaking blasphemous words.

He reminded them that Moses was sent by God, "to be a ruler and a deliverer by the hand of the angel which appeared to him in the bush" of his people, who were in Egypt; that "they refused" him, "saying, Who made thee a ruler and a Judge?" that "he brought them out, after that he had shewed wonders and signs in the land of Egypt, and in the Red Sea, and in the wilderness forty years." And then—after setting forth the fact that he was "a ruler and a deliverer" sent of God, and that they to whom he was sent "refused" him—he said, "This is that Moses, which said unto the children of Israel, A prophet shall the Lord your God raise up unto you of your brethren, like unto me; him shall ye hear."

Now, if this prophecy was fulfilled in Jesus—if he was the prophet to be raised up *like unto* Moses—he could not teach *contrary* to Moses. Or, if Jesus introduced a *new* religion and instituted a new Church, he could not be that prophet; for he was to be of the "brethren," and "like unto" Moses. He was not to form a *new* brother-

hood, but was himself to be of the brethren, of the children of Israel. He was not only to be of them, but raised up unto them, "a ruler and a deliverer" to them. Stephen immediately adds, "This is he that was in the *church* in the wilderness with the angel which spake to him in the Mount Sinai, and with our fathers: who received the lively oracles to give unto us." The same "lively oracles" received by Moses in the mount for the government of Israel, were to be "given unto us;" and to them Stephen appealed in support of both his faith and practice.

The people whose faith they embody, and whose practice they were intended to control in the days of Moses, he calls "the Church." And this he does to establish the correctness of his own faith and his identity with the people of God. His argument is plainly this: The people whom God delivered by the hand of Moses, and to whom he gave "the lively oracles," were the Church; and Jesus being the prophet whom God was to "raise up unto" them, *like unto Moses*, we who, taught by "the

lively oracles," accept him as our "Ruler and Deliverer," are still the Church. But he presents the converse of this also: "To whom our fathers would not obey, but thrust him from them, and in their hearts turned back again into Egypt." Some rejected Moses and "thrust him from them," refusing to recognize his authority as divine. So also did some reject Jesus. Their fathers had "persecuted the prophets, and slain them which showed before the coming of the Just One;" and now that he had come, they had betrayed and murdered him, and were persecuting his followers. The "fathers," who would not obey Moses, "but thrust him from them," forfeited the favor of God, and were cut off from his people. The "uncircumcised in heart," who rejected Jesus, offended the same God, and forfeited membership in his Church.

To deny this is to charge Stephen with great folly. It was known that the disciples of Jesus were called the Church, and that by Church was meant the people of God in covenant. It was known also that the Jews were the covenant people of God,

with a history reaching back to the days of Abraham, and that this fact could not be controverted, being sustained by the Scriptures—all the Scriptures then in existence. Now if the Church was a newly instituted something, wholly distinct and separate from Judaism, and formed on the basis of a new and different covenant, it is unaccountable that, in his defense before the council of the Jews, Stephen should apply the name of this new organization to that for which it was substituted, and that he should set up no claim to such a title for that which was really the Church, and of which he was a member.

Unless it be found in the fact that, to accept Jesus as the Christ, the promised Redeemer, was to *continue* in the faith and *remain* in the Church—he certainly made no such claim—but if found in that fact, he not only made the claim, but proved it beyond the possibility of a doubt. This is just what he did; and in so doing established the identity of the Church, and with it the right of infants to membership in it. Of course they are to be baptized.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE COVENANT—WHEN AND WHERE GIVEN.

IF the Church is a New Testament institution, founded on a new covenant, and to be governed *exclusively* by New Testament Scriptures, will some one be kind enough to tell us when this new covenant was given? It must have been given before, or at the time that the Church was organized, or the Church could not be founded upon it. And it must have been given by Christ, the founder of the Church; for, before the Church was organized, there could be no officers of and no official act for it. If organized by the apostles, they must have acted on authority from Christ; and, if on a new covenant, they must have exhibited their authority and explained the terms of the covenant upon which they proposed to organize. Where and when was it done?

If the New Testament be "our creed," we certainly have no right to believe and teach anything that it does not contain. If Christ or his apostles said anything about a new covenant before the Church was organized—or till years after—or if they ever organized the Church at all, they have failed to leave any record of the fact; and therefore we can not be required to believe either.

Jesus Christ expounded and enforced the Old Testament Scriptures, but *never* opposed their teachings, nor intimated a purpose to introduce a new religion. He was himself a Jew, brought up in the Jewish Church—the same church that was "in the wilderness," and that had been perpetuated by him to the time of his manifestation in the flesh—taught in the synagogues of the Jews, taught from their own Scriptures and enforced the claims of their religion, the sum of which he tells us was, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength, and thy neighbor as thyself." He said he "came not to destroy, but to fulfill;" and when in-

quired of by one as to what he must do to inherit eternal life, referred him to the Scriptures—Old Testament—and assured him that if he would obey them he should live. Strange procedure, indeed, for one whose business was to abolish the Jewish religion and institute a *new* Church, on the basis of a new covenant.

When this “new covenant” is spoken of, the word covenant is often used as synonymous with testament, and the Old and New Testaments, by this means, opposed the one to the other. The Church, according to this notion, was organized on the basis of the New Testament. Let us see how that will do. All parties agree that the Church existed as early as the day of Pentecost. But not a word of the New Testament was written until several years after that—at least seven. Then the Church was organized on something that did not exist, and was for several years without a charter, without any Scripture to guide its members in doctrine or government—the Old Testament being no longer in force, and the New not yet given. How were they

to justify themselves in excluding the children—if they had done so—and in other doctrines and practices peculiar to their new organization? What defense could they make against those Jews who, while they rejected Jesus, professed to believe the Scriptures, and could appeal to them as authority in all things pertaining to the worship of God?

It may be said, they had the inspired apostles to guide and teach them. True; but if they taught so important a fact as the setting up of a new Church, with a new law of membership, new rules of government, etc., why was not some record made of the fact, and preserved for the guidance of the Church in after times? And, in the absence of such record, how are we to know that they so did and taught? We do know that they constantly appealed to the Scriptures—Old Testament—both in support of the doctrines they preached and for defense before the Jewish church courts, when arraigned for trial; but if they organized a new Church, preached a single new doctrine, or changed the form of church gov-

ernment, they have failed to record the fact, or to give the slightest intimation of either in all their writings. This we hold to be not only inconsistent with the new-church idea, but, on such an hypothesis, preposterous and absurd, and therefore impossible.

We have said that the New Testament was not written until several years after the Pentecost; the history it contains begins, however, before the birth of Jesus. Does it open with the announcement of a new religion, or the organization of a new church? Does it anywhere assail the Jewish Church, its doctrines, government or forms of worship? Does it offer a new Savior, a different salvation, or a new condition of salvation? or does it change the law of membership? If any of these things is done, it will be an easy matter to show it. Just point out the passage recording the fact, and the controversy will end—there will be no longer room for doubt. But if it can not be shown, the only reason that can be assigned is, that no such thing ever occurred.

To call attention to this fact ought to suffice, but in addition we notice the blend-

ing of the New Testament with the Old; or, rather, how the New grows out of the Old; and is, therefore, one with it. The Old Testament closes with Malachi. He was the last of the prophets—the last inspired writer before the coming of Christ in the flesh. Matthew opens the New. Four hundred years had passed since Malachi wrote. Many changes had been wrought; empires had risen and passed away; generation had succeeded generation to the grave, but no change had been wrought in the truth of God. The Church remained the same; prophecy changed into history, but did not affect the truth on which the faith of God's people rested, and *could not*, therefore, affect the Church. "Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea," born of a Jewish virgin, was circumcised and brought up in the Church, the religion of the Jews; grew to manhood, was baptized of John, a Jewish priest, and proclaimed himself the Messiah, the promised seed which should bruise the serpent's head, and in whom all the nations of the earth were to be blessed. The Church was di-

vided, some accepting and others rejecting him. He was finally put to death—crucified. His disciples said that he had risen from the dead, and that many of them had seen him. His enemies said that his body was stolen while the guards slept. Time passed on; time was given for calm reflection and mature thought, and Matthew, one of his disciples who was personally acquainted with all the facts, being associated with him to the time of his death, and having seen him after his resurrection, guided by the Holy Spirit, undertakes to record his history. How does he begin? The very first sentence he utters couples his history, through David, to Abraham: “The book of the generation of Jesus Christ, the Son of David, the Son of Abraham.” This is the opening sentence of the New Testament, and is followed by a detailed genealogy, through forty-two generations, from Abraham to the birth of Jesus, who is called Christ. A strange introduction to a new system of religion, or the formation of a new Church! But to show, as was evidently intended, the fulfillment of prophecy

and the consequent identity of the Church, with the same religion and the same Christ in whom the covenant with Abraham was confirmed, it is full of significance and worthy of the God who inspired it.

The introduction of the Gospel by Mark also connects the two: "The beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God, as it is written in the prophets, Behold, I send my messenger before thy face, which shall prepare thy way before thee. The voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his paths straight." This prophecy he proceeds to show, finds its fulfillment in John the Baptist and Jesus Christ—John the messenger, Christ the Lord. Truth is always the same; the only change being from prophecy to history—from future to past—and the faith which accepts the truth is of necessity the same, always recognizing and accepting a *present* Savior, whatever relation the facts in the history of the manifestation of that Savior in the flesh may bear to time. Jesus Christ is "the same yesterday, to-day and forever," the eternal I AM,

always present to save; and the faith which justifies, and by which the sinner is constituted a child of God, must always recognize him as a *present* Savior. It was faith in Christ as a *present* Savior that secured to the prophets the favor of God and the inspiration which enabled them to tell of his *future* manifestation to Israel. And it is faith in Jesus as a *present* Savior that enables the believer now to assert with confidence the *past* fact that he died for sinners—that he was “the Christ, the Son of the living God.” The historical fact, touching the incarnation, to them was future, to us is past; but the salvation secured by the death of the Incarnate One was and is a present blessing, realized through faith in a present Savior. They “believed and therefore have spoken; we also believe and therefore speak.”

Whether the facts in the history of the manifested Redeemer—his life, sufferings, death, resurrection and ascension—be future, present or past, according as men lived before, at the time of or after his appearance in the flesh, the interest of each and

all in him as a Savior from sin and death, is always a present interest; and if he were not always a present Savior, these interests could not be attended to—the wants of man could not be met; in a word, man could not be saved. But, if always a present Savior, and faith in him as such always necessary to salvation, the duties which man owes to God, and which in accepting salvation at his hands he pledges himself to discharge, must of necessity be always the same.

One of these duties, imposed by God himself, and practiced by his people from the giving of the covenant to Abraham, is the recognition of God's right to the children and of their interest in the world's Redeemer, by a formal dedication of them to him in placing the seal of the covenant upon them. If Jesus be the Christ, in and through whom these rights and privileges were secured, and by whom these duties were imposed, to accept him as such and submit to his ordinances is most solemnly to pledge continued faithfulness in the discharge of these duties. And, unless God

has relinquished his claim upon the children, or they have less interest in the seed in whom all nations are to be blessed, it is absolutely certain that his claim upon them and their interest in the atoning merits of Christ should still be recognized, by placing the seal of the covenant—the sign of ownership—upon them; for they are not their own, but are bought with a price, and therefore should be taught to glorify God in their bodies and spirits, which are his. To refuse to baptize them on the ground that they are to choose for themselves, is to teach them that they are their own and have a right to withhold their service from God, which is both false and dangerous.

The writers of the New Testament could have selected no more effectual a way to teach the perpetuity of everything taught in the Old, than by showing, as they have done, that the Jesus of the New is the Messiah of the Old Testament Scriptures—that he is the fulfillment of prophecy. This being established, it follows unavoidably that whatever was not typical, and therefore temporary—ceasing of necessity with its

fulfillment—must continue, unless abolished by divine authority. It is, no doubt, because of this that they have taken so much pains to establish the unity of truth, in showing the oneness of the Scriptures. In the first chapter of Luke the same connection is shown. Mary, who was to “bring forth a son, and call his name Jesus,” said: “He hath holpen his servant Israel, in remembrance of his mercy; as he spake to our fathers, to Abraham and his seed forever.” (54th and 55th verses.) And “Zacharias was filled with the Holy Ghost, and prophesied, saying, Blessed be the Lord God of Israel; for he hath visited and redeemed his people, and hath raised up a horn of salvation for us in the house of David; as he spake by the mouth of his holy prophets, which have been since the world began: That we should be saved from our enemies, and from the hand of all that hate us; to perform the mercy promised to our fathers, and to remember his holy covenant, the oath which he sware to our father Abraham.” Prejudice aside, and no pet theories to defend, who, with these state-

ments before him, could for a moment doubt that the Church and religion of the New Testament are the same with that of the Old?

The Gospel by John opens with testimony of a like character: "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. All things were made by him, and without him was not anything made that was made. In him was life, and the life was the light of men." "And the Word was made flesh and dwelt among us." Here we are taught that Jesus Christ—who was, without doubt, the Word made flesh—was "in the beginning with God," that he "was God," that "all things were made by him," that "in him was life," and that "the life was the light of men." What more was he after the incarnation? He said, "I am the light of the world;" and John tells us he was "that eternal life, which was with the Father, and was manifested unto us." Jesus Christ, then, was the manifested God — "Emmanuel, God with us;" "God manifest in the flesh." He was the "Redeemer," of the Old Testa-

ment, as well as of the New. He was the same God who said, through the prophet Isaiah, "Fear not, thou worm Jacob, and ye men of Israel; I will help thee, saith the Lord, and thy *Redeemer*, the Holy One of Israel." (Isaiah xli. 14.) The same who said, "For I will contend with him that contendeth with thee, and I will save thy children." "And all flesh shall know that I the Lord am thy Savior, and thy Redeemer, the Mighty One of Jacob." (Isa. xlix. 25, 26.) The same who, when speaking of the time when "the Lord, whom ye seek, shall suddenly come to his temple, even the messenger of the covenant, whom ye delight in," said: "For I am the Lord, I change not; therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed." (Mal. iii. 1-6.)

The New Testament begins with the announcement of this fact—each one of the gospels begins with it. The Acts of the Apostles does the same. Indeed, the whole of the New Testament is founded upon and grows out of this fundamental truth. If it is not so Jesus was an impostor and the New Testament is false. If it is, then the

introduction of a new religion or the beginning of a new Church was absolutely impossible; for, as we have elsewhere shown, the Church is composed of the people of God, and the people of God are those, and those only, who are “in Christ Jesus”—who are the saved of the Lord. This was the case before the Incarnation, as well as after, if Jesus Christ is the Savior and Redeemer of whom the prophet spake; and if not, he is no Savior at all. He is that “spiritual Rock” that followed the “Church in the wilderness,” and of which they drank; for the apostle says, “that Rock was Christ.”

Man—all men—every human being, is either in a justified state—a saved relation to God—or he is not; if he is, it is by virtue of the Atonement; if he is not, it is because he refuses or fails to accept Christ as his Savior. He is either in Christ or out of him. If in Christ, he is a part of the body of Christ, which is the Church, and entitled to all that was purchased by him, and to the seal of the covenant by which the title is secured. Baptism is now the seal of the covenant, or there is none. All, therefore,

who are in Christ Jesus are entitled to baptism. Infants are in Christ, or they are not. If they are not, they are no part of the people of God. But they are, throughout the Scriptures, recognized as and classed with his people. Either, then, God has a people out of Christ—and no man can conceive of such a thing—or infants are in Christ.

Again, God, who calls them his people, had the seal of the covenant placed upon them, and says, "I change not." Jesus Christ is God, and says, "of such is the kingdom of God." "The kingdom of God," is composed of the people of God—the subjects of the king are the kingdom. Jesus Christ was the king of the Jews. The Jews, then, were his subjects—his kingdom. If the Jews were a politico-ecclesiastical organization, Jesus Christ was a politico-ecclesiastical king. As is the king, so is the kingdom. Either the Jews were a spiritual kingdom or Christ was a temporal, political king. But Jesus says, "My kingdom is not of this world." And Paul says, "He is not a Jew, which is one out-

wardly; neither is that circumcision which is outward in the flesh: But he is a Jew, which is one inwardly; and circumcision is that of the heart in the spirit, and not in the letter whose praise is not of men, but of God." The Jews, then, were a spiritual kingdom, and Christ was their king. It is true, they were not "all Israel, who were of Israel," but they ought to have been; and the fact that they were not, no more destroyed the character of the kingdom than the fact that all who are in the (visible) Church now, are not "born of the Spirit," destroys the Church. This kingdom, of which Christ was king, was composed, in part, of infants, who had the seal of circumcision upon them.

Now consider that the writers of the gospels were themselves Jews, taught in the Jewish religion and scriptures; that they nowhere renounce that religion, nor claim to have found a new savior, nor propose to organize a new church; but that they simply *continued* to acknowledge God as their king, recognizing him in the person of Jesus Christ; and that Christ acknowledged them

as his subjects, and recognized their children as "of the kingdom," and the identity and perpetuity of the Church, with its infant membership, is an established fact. Paul says, "We are the circumcision which worship God in the spirit and rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh;" which is the same as if he had said, we are the true Jews—the Church. (Phil. iii. 3.) Of course the children were included; for, be it remembered that, so far as we know, until about fifteen years after the death of Christ, there had not been added to the Church a single member outside of the Jewish people. The only additions, up to this time, being from among those Jews who at first rejected their king, and, of course, left the Church or kingdom. Being convinced of their error, they afterwards repented and returned to the Church—were added to those who accepted the king and continued in the kingdom. If their children were ever excluded, it is not recorded. The king himself had said they were still "of the kingdom."

Thus we see that the manifestation of

“the King eternal,” who “is king forever and ever,” did not destroy his kingdom; but that, “Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth, even forever.”

CHAPTER IX.

THE COMMISSION.

“Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, even to the end of the world. Amen.” (Matt. xxviii. 19, 20.)

We have traced the history of the Church from the renewing of the promise to Abraham, under the covenant in which it was sealed, to the coming of the promised seed, Christ, in whom that “covenant was confirmed of God;” and have found that infants, on whom the seal of the covenant was originally placed by express command of God, continued to be recognized as a part of the covenant people—the Church—throughout the entire history. We have seen, also, that the prophets, foretelling the

work of the promised Redeemer when he should be manifested to Israel, said, "He shall gather the lambs with his arms and carry them in his bosom;" that "their children also shall be as aforetime." And we have found the New Testament opening with a recognition of Jesus as the Christ, the promised seed of Abraham, and him declaring the children to be "of the kingdom." It would be passing strange if, after all this, the children should be excluded from the covenant and Church of God, and deprived of the right of recognition as subjects in his kingdom. Nevertheless, if it has been done, we wish to know it, and therefore press our inquiries a little farther.

He who was "born king of the Jews," and who recognized their "little children" as "of the kingdom," is charged with omitting, and thereby excluding them from his Church and kingdom, in the commission which he gave to disciple—in fulfillment of the original promise, which we have seen included infants—"all nations." This is a grave charge, involving as it does, to say the least, apparent inconsistencies in

the king. If, however, it is true, and can be shown to be so, though we can not see the consistency, we will bow submissively to the divine behest and confess the difficulty to be in our want of ability to understand. But does the commission exclude them? Is there anything in it that can not apply to infants? If so, what is it? Is it in the first word teach, taking that as its meaning? (There are two different words in the commission translated teach.) Will any say that children can not be taught? Why, this same "king of the Jews," who now commands the teaching, had, for centuries, made it the duty of this very people (the Jews), to whom the commission was given, to teach the children. "Therefore shall ye lay up these my words in your heart and in your soul, and bind them for a sign upon your hand, that they may be as frontlets between your eyes. And ye *shall teach them your children*, speaking of them when thou sittest in thine house." (Deut. xi. 18, 19.) Had he just learned that they could not be taught? or determined that they should not be?

But it may be said the word means disciple, and should be so translated. Grant it; and what then? Can not children be disciplined — brought into the school of Christ? What is it to be a disciple, but to be in the kingdom? and had he not said: “Of such is the kingdom?” Will any one contend that to disciple is not to induct into the kingdom? It can not mean to renew, to regenerate them. Only God can do that; and this is something to be done by man. If man is to make disciples, it must be done in some outward form, by symbol or sign. How, then, is it to be done? By “baptizing them?” If so, there is no difficulty in the case; for certainly children can be baptized. If it be said, as it is by some, that discipling comes before baptism — that they are to be made disciples and then baptized—still we ask, How is it to be done? Remember, man is to do it. Is it by teaching? If so, in what does the discipling differ from the after-teaching? After baptism they are to be taught “to observe all things” commanded by the Savior. Does the teaching before baptism contemplate

less or more than that? If less, how much less? and what is the part to be taught? If more, in what does the overplus consist? If they are to make disciples, and then baptize them—baptize them *because* they are disciples—it is certainly a matter of interest to know what is to be done; to know *how man* is to qualify his fellows for Christian baptism. Until we do know, we certainly can not know that infants can not be disciplined, and that they are not to be baptized.

If it be said, "They are to be taught to repent and believe on the Lord J sus Christ," we ask, Does this teaching make disciples, or does it simply show men how they may become disciples? Do they not, so far as human agency is concerned, make themselves disciples by the personal exercise of the necessary faith? If so, in what sense does the minister make disciples? Allowing that he does thus, instrumentally, make disciples, we still ask, Why are they to be taught to repent and believe? Is it not because they have sinned? And if they must repent and believe because they have

sinned, and in order to the pardon of their sins, are they any better after they are pardoned than they were before they sinned? or is their relation to God different from what it was before? If not, what reason exists now for baptizing them that did not exist before they sinned? Certainly none, except the fact that they have sinned. Sin forfeits the divine favor, and when God pardons the sinner he receives him back to the forfeited favor. If on this ground he is to be baptized, either he was entitled to it before he sinned—while in innocent infancy—or baptism is a premium set by God upon sin!

What, then, we still ask, is there in the commission that excludes infants? Is it that the subjects to be baptized are specified in such terms as to exclude them? Let us see. Who are to be baptized? "All nations." "Go teach all nations, baptizing them." If there are infants in "all nations," then are they in the commission, and to be baptized. Not only is there nothing in it excluding them, but when we consider that He who gave the commission to "teach all

nations, baptizing them," is the same who said to Abraham: "In thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed," and who, having placed infants in the covenant, taught that they were to be commanded after their parents in the service of God, thus raising up and perpetuating a people unto himself, it amounts to an absolute certainty that he intended them to be baptized and continued in his Church.

Let us take another view of the subject. We have seen elsewhere that the promise sealed in covenant with Abraham was the same that was originally given to Adam; that it was renewed to Abraham in a form adapted to the changed condition of the human race, which change was brought about by a miraculous visitation of God upon man. This change did not affect the unity of human nature but only the relations to each other of the individuals bearing that nature; giving them a diversity of tongues, or languages, and dispersing them into different nationalities. Each and all of these different nations, being possessed of the same nature, were equally interested

in the original promise, and in the development of the plan of salvation on which it rested. Hence its form, as renewed to Abraham, embraces "all the nations" and "all the families of the earth." To all nations there was one God, and the seed in whom all were to be blessed was One; so they who accepted salvation in him were to constitute *one* family, and come at last to speak *one* language, the pure language of Zion. Hence they were taught to say, "Our Father, which art in heaven."

Lest this *oneness* be lost sight of in the diversity of nationalities and languages, it was necessary that there should be some bond of union and a center to which all should be drawn and around which the members of this one family should be gathered. This center was presented in the promised seed, "which is Christ," and the covenant with its seal furnished the bond of union. The plan of salvation was perfect, and Christ, who was "as a lamb slain from the foundation of the world," was a *present* Savior from the time the announcement was first made that the seed of the

woman should bruise the serpent's head; but, *as* the seed of the woman, the seed of Abraham—the *manifested* Christ—he was, as yet, given only in promise. Hence the seal of the covenant and the ceremonial services to which the sealed were bound, were typical and symbolical, speaking at once of the cutting off of sins and of the cutting off of him who was to be an offering for sin. Thus the unity of the Church—the oneness of God's people—was perpetuated, and the oracles of truth preserved until the promised seed should come, who is “the head over all things to the Church, which is his body.” The blessings secured in this covenant were never, however, confined to the natural descendants of Abraham; but any and all were at liberty to accept the terms of the covenant, identify themselves with the people of God, and avail themselves of its blessings, bringing their children with them.

This condition of things continued until “Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea.” If he was the promised seed, then is he the world's Redeemer. The question of his

Messiahship hinges here. But, if he was the Christ, the promised seed, he was born under the covenant which secured the promise. That he was born under the covenant none for whom we write will be disposed to doubt; for to deny it would be to deny that he is the Christ. He was not only born under the covenant, and received the appointed seal — circumcision — but he remained in it, and to this day it is impossible to conceive of him as being outside of the covenant in which was sealed blessings to all nations. Let the reader pause and make the effort. Let him try to think of Christ, the promised seed, the sum of all good, the source of all blessings, as being outside of the covenant which secured the promise, and which was itself confirmed in him. Of necessity, the very moment it ceases the blessings secured by it fail.

In the Abrahamic covenant the promise of blessings to all nations was sealed; which promise, it is admitted by all parties, is now being fulfilled. But if the covenant be destroyed, what becomes of the promise? where is the guaranty of its fulfillment?

and on what ground is it perpetuated? You might just as well tell me that Jesus Christ has ceased to be the Savior as to tell me that the covenant, in which the promise of salvation is sealed, has ceased. They are one and inseparable. The covenant itself was founded upon the atonement made by Christ, and as long as he reigns and the atonement remains a fact, so long must the covenant remain in force. Truly, it is an "everlasting covenant," "confirmed in Christ;" so long as he continues a Savior, just so long will it embrace the saved; and just so long will it continue to be true that "They which are of faith, the same are the children of Abraham;" for, "if ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to *the promise*." Just as soon will Jesus Christ cease to be the seed of Abraham as will they who are "the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus" cease to be of the Abrahamic covenant, or their little children, by divine authority, be denied the right of membership in the Church and the benefits of its sealing ordinance—baptism.

Jesus Christ being the promised seed to whom all the typical services of the covenant looked, of course when the prophecies were fulfilled, the prophetic services ceased, and to continue them would be to deny that Jesus is the Christ, as some have done and are still doing. The fact that he has come, however, does not destroy the covenant, but only establishes it, and is the signal that the promise which it contains of blessings to all nations is about to be more fully accomplished. Accordingly, in the commission which authorizes the carrying of the gospel — which “before was preached to Abraham,” and which contained the blessings of the covenant—“into all the world,” he adopts the very language of the covenant—teach (disciple) “all nations.”

But the plurality of nations, with the diversity of tongues, as we have seen, resulted from a miraculous display of divine power, and necessitated the renewal of the original promise in a form adapted to this changed condition of the human family. Not a promise of a plurality of Saviors,

but the promise of salvation, through the one seed, which is Christ, to all the human race (which is one), notwithstanding the diversity of nationalities and tongues.

The evidence that Jesus is the Christ, the promised seed in the "everlasting covenant," culminated in the Pentecostal baptism, when "there appeared unto them cloven tongues, like as of fire, and sat upon each of them; and they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance." Here we have a miracle corresponding with the one which necessitated the form of the promise as sealed in covenant with Abraham, qualifying the disciples for carrying out the provisions of the covenant in blessings to "all nations," and establishing forever and beyond all doubt the fact that Jesus is the Christ, the promised seed of Abraham.

In the very first sentence of the New Testament he is announced as "the son of David, the son of Abraham;" and then his genealogy is given in detail, to show his identity with the covenant-people of God.

He was circumcised and brought up under that covenant, observing all its requirements; he taught in the synagogues of the Jews, and out of their own Scriptures; selected Jews for his apostles and trained them for the special work for which they were designed, without once intimating to them that the covenant under which they were reared was to be destroyed or displaced by another; taught them to recognize "little children" as "of the kingdom," and finally commissioned them to "go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature,"—to "teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded *you*; and lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world." They were not, however, to go at once; but, as St. Luke tells us: "He said unto them, these are the words which I spake unto you, while I was yet with you, that all things must be fulfilled, which are written in the *law of Moses, and in the prophets, and in the Psalms, concerning me*. Then

opened he their understanding that they might understand the Scriptures, and said unto them, Thus it is written, and thus it behooved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day: and that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among *all nations*, beginning at Jerusalem. And ye are witnesses of these things. And, behold, I send the promise of my Father upon you: but tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem until ye be endued with power from on high."

Here, first, he reminds them of what he had previously taught them: "That all things must be fulfilled which are written in the law of Moses, and in the prophets, and in the Psalms concerning me." Second. "Then opened he their understanding that they might understand the Scriptures"—Old Testament, of course. Third. What, their understanding being opened, they understood the Scriptures to teach: "Thus it is written, and thus it behooved Christ to suffer and to rise from the dead the third day: and that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among

all nations, beginning at Jerusalem." Fourth. "And ye are witnesses of these things," viz.: the sufferings, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ, in fulfillment of the Scriptures, and the ground upon which "repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations," in accordance with the provisions of the covenant, that in him all the nations of the earth should be blessed. Fifth. To qualify them for the work to which they were called, they were to be "endued with power from on high," according to the promise of the Father, for which they were to "tarry in the city of Jerusalem."

Now turn to Acts i., and you will see that this "promise of the Father" was baptism: For John truly baptized with water; but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost not many days hence." The effect of this baptism was a diversity of tongues, but the Spirit is *one*; and this diversity of tongues was designed to teach the unity, or oneness, of the "body of Christ," the Church: "For by one Spirit are we all baptized into *one* body, whether we

be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have been all made to drink into *one* spirit." This oneness of the Church notwithstanding the diversity of nationalities and tongues, being the result of the "one baptism," is a standing, perpetual and irresistible evidence of the Messiahship of Christ and, as such, of the perpetuity of the Abrahamic covenant. Thus it is seen that the commission, so far from excluding infants from the pale of the Church and depriving them of the sign of recognition—baptism—when we consider the circumstances under which it was given, the miraculous gift of tongues qualifying the disciples to carry out its provisions, that its provisions are precisely those of the Abrahamic covenant, and that Jesus Christ, the seed of the woman, the seed of Abraham, the fountain and source of all blessings, is the author of each and the substance of all that is promised or realized, is an explicit command to baptize them. It would be as reasonable to deny that Jesus was the seed of Abraham, until he reached the years of manhood, as to deny that infants, for whom

he died, and who are unconditionally saved by virtue of his death, have a right to that which is a symbol of the purchased blessing. The force and design of this second miracle of tongues, when taken in connection with the first and the form of the promise which it necessitated, will appear more clearly when we consider that, "There were dwelling at Jerusalem Jews, devout men, out of every nation under heaven." The providences of God are, indeed, sometimes strange, but when properly understood always speak the wisdom and goodness of an infinite Sovereign. He had, by a miraculous visitation, produced the diversity of tongues and nations; he then renewed the promise in a form adapted to the change, and sealed it in covenant with a chosen, peculiar people, and instituted such sacrifices and forms of service as were adapted to the development and illustration of the plan of salvation on which it rested, and in the completed manifestation of which it was to find its fulfillment in the full, free and continuous offer of life to "all the nations of the earth," without respect of

persons or the intervention of the peculiar ceremonials that were necessary to prefigure the coming of Christ, the promised seed.

This peculiar people, by his special providence, were preserved and perpetuated distinct from all others, till the fullness of time had come; and yet, while distinct and separate from all other nations, they had no national government or language at the time the commission was given, but were scattered among all nations and spoke all languages. Some from each and all these nations were gathered at Jerusalem. "There were dwelling at Jerusalem, *Jews*, devout men, out of *every nation under heaven*." In this fact may be found the reason for "beginning at Jerusalem." What would more certainly, or could more effectually, establish in the minds of this united, and yet diverse people, the Messiahship of Jesus, than for "every man," "out of every nation under heaven," to hear "in his own tongue, wherein he was born," though the speakers were "all Galileans?" And this was the effect of the second miracle of tongues. They could not but think of the form of the

promise to Abraham—"all the nations of the earth;" and they were distinctly reminded of what one of their own prophets, under the seal of the covenant securing that promise, had said: "And it shall come to pass in the last days, saith God, I will pour out of my Spirit upon *all flesh*." What, then, must have been their conclusion? That the Abrahamic covenant was destroyed or displaced by another? If so, what evidence did they give of such conclusion? Where and when was that other covenant given? who were the parties to it? what were its terms of membership and what its seal? Let the reader bring an impartial, unprejudiced mind to bear upon these questions, and the conclusion will be inevitable that the Abrahamic covenant, so far from being displaced or destroyed, was just beginning to be fully developed, and its promise of blessings to "all nations" to be understood.

CHAPTER X.

APOSTOLIC PRACTICE.

HAVING examined the commission itself, let us now inquire how the apostles understood it. Did they understand it to exclude infants? If so, we shall find something either in their teachings or practice indicating it. The first sermon preached under its direction was by Peter on the day of Pentecost. It was addressed to the Jews, the covenant people of God. In it he proves the divinity, the Messiahship of Jesus, and concludes his argument in these words: "Therefore let all the *house of Israel* know assuredly that God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ. Now when they heard this, they were pricked in their heart, and said unto Peter and the rest of the apostles, Men and brethren, what shall we do? Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be bap-

tized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost. For *the promise* is unto you and your *children*, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call." This passage has been noticed elsewhere, but let us look at it again. "The promise is unto you and your children." If by "the promise" Peter meant the promise given in covenant to Abraham, infant membership is by him positively and in round terms asserted; for everybody knows that they were by express command of God embraced in that covenant, and that they have never been excluded therefrom. And if it was still in force on the day of Pentecost, and acted upon and enforced by Peter, under the commission of our Lord, it is still, and must continue to be. And if so, infant church membership is undeniably an established fact. This nobody pretends to deny; and hence it is contended that Peter referred, not to the promise given Abraham, but to the prophecy of Joel about the pouring out of the Spirit.

Well, let it be assumed that he did; then what follows? Why, that the promise of baptism (it is called baptism in Acts, first chapter) was given, under the seal of the Abrahamic covenant, to the covenant people of God, and according to the terms of the covenant, "to them that are afar off," to "all flesh," "all the nations of the earth;" and that because this promise of baptism was to them and their children, they should "repent and be baptized," and trust in the name of Jesus Christ—in whom the covenant was confirmed and through whom the promised blessing must be realized—for the remission of sins. But why associate baptism with the name of Jesus Christ? Was it because they were now under a new covenant, and required to accept a new Savior? No; but just the reverse. The prophet had said, in the passage quoted by Peter: "And it shall come to pass, that whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be saved." Peter shows that God hath made Jesus "both Lord and Christ." To reject him, therefore, was to reject salvation; for "neither is there salvation in any other;

for there is none other name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved." He had "received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost," and it was only by receiving him that they could receive the Holy Ghost, which he "shed forth" upon them. In rejecting him they had departed from the faith, rejected their own Scriptures, and deprived themselves of the blessings promised to them and their children. It was therefore necessary, in receiving baptism, to recognize his name as the only means of obtaining the promised baptism from above.

Thus we see that, whether in the Old Testament or in the New, Christ Jesus is the center from which all truth radiates, and to which all truth tends; that he is the sum of all good and the source of all blessings; so that to be in him is to be in favor with the Father, and entitled to everything secured by the death of the Son. He is the bond of union between fallen, redeemed man and God; and as long as it remains a fact that the world has had but one Redeemer, but one Savior, the unity of the

Church, the body of Christ, in all ages of the world, must remain a *self-evident fact*; and the cross, instead of being the dividing line between the people of God who lived before, and those who live after his death, is the indissoluble bond of union between the two; "for we are all one in Christ Jesus, and if we be Christ's, then are we Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise."

Nor does it matter by what name we call that work of the Spirit which puts them "in Christ Jesus;" the work and the agent that performs it, of necessity, are the same. If we say in the one case, it was "the circumcision made without hands," and in the other, "we are all baptized by one Spirit into one body," it is an undeniable fact that these are but two names for the same thing. It is the "putting off the body of the sins of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ: Buried with him in baptism, wherein also ye are risen with him through the faith of the operation of God, who hath raised him from the dead." If infants were ever entitled to the sign or symbol of that work

of the Spirit, and thereby recognized as of the people of God, they are now, and must continue to be, entitled to the same. That they were so recognized before the death of Christ, will not, because it can not, be denied. It follows, therefore, that they are entitled to Christian baptism; for to deny that baptism is a symbol of the purifying influence of the Spirit, would be to fly in the face of the plainest truth, and we will not insult the common-sense of the reader by an attempt to prove it.

If, therefore, Peter referred to the prophecy of Joel, when he said, "The promise is unto you and your children," the force of his language is about this: The promise of baptism by the Spirit is unto you and your children; Jesus is he who sheds forth this baptism which ye now see; receive ye, therefore, the symbol of it—water baptism—trusting in his name that he, being thus recognized by you, may fulfill the promise to you—baptize you with the Holy Ghost. Children having always been recognized as entitled to the symbol of the Spirit's

work in salvation, his language is an express warrant for their baptism.

The practice of the apostles, under the commission, was to baptize households—families: Lydia “was baptized, and her household.” The jailer “was baptized, he and all his, straightway.”—Acts xvi. 15 and 33. We will not attempt to *prove* that there were infants in these families, nor even assume that there were; though the circumstances, and the language employed, are all favorable to such assumption. We do not regard it as important to the argument. It is enough to know that the apostles were themselves brought up in the Church, had been used to infant membership all their lives, and that the only Church they had ever known was organized under a covenant especially providing for their recognition as members; and that he who gave the commission was a member of that Church, recognized its authority, taught out of its Scriptures, and only sought to establish the faith of its members in the truth of those Scriptures and, by consequence, in him who came to fulfill them.

Having never left the Church himself, nor advised others to do so; but, on the other hand, being "King of the Jews," and having taught his disciples that "little children" are "of the kingdom," he sent them out to "disciple all nations, baptizing them." Under these circumstances, it is absolutely impossible, with any sort of consistency, to suppose that they, without a positive prohibition by the King, would refuse to baptize infants.

The promise was not only to "all the nations of the earth," but to "all the *families* of the earth," also; and the idea of family was kept up through all the history of the covenant people, till the Promised Seed came, and perpetuated by him in the prayer which he taught his disciples to pray: "Our Father which art in heaven," etc. In this prayer we are not only taught that the people of God are a family, but also that "Our Father" is a King, and that his children are the subjects and constitute his kingdom. After he taught them this prayer, he said distinctly, "Suffer little children to come unto me, and forbid them

not; for of such is the kingdom of God." Now, unless it can be shown that the Church is something different and distinct from the people, or kingdom, of God, and that to disciple all nations is not to bring them into the Church, it follows that the commission is a positive command to baptize children. And as, under it, the apostles taught and practiced household, or family, baptisms, without stopping to inquire whether there were infants in them or not, it is evident they so understood it. If, therefore, it could be proved that there were no infants in any of the families baptized by them—which is impossible—it remains to be proved that they would not have baptized them, if there had been.

The covenant relation of children to God, as a necessary result of the plan of salvation and inseparable from the atonement, having been so long recognized by God and sanctioned by Jesus Christ, nothing short of a positive prohibition could justify the apostles in refusing to baptize them. As this is not found in the commission, nor in any of Christ's instructions;

in the absence of a plain and positive refusal, on the part of the apostles, to baptize them, it is the height of presumption to say that they did refuse, or that they ought to have done so.

If, therefore, it had not been commanded in the New Testament, and if there were no positive evidence that the apostles baptized infants, it would be extremely presumptuous and hazardous to refuse them membership in the Church; as to do so, would be to question the wisdom of God, and to condemn the practice of the Church, under his special direction, throughout its entire history from Abraham to Christ! It would be to array the New Testament against the Old, the teachings and practice of Christ against the teachings and practice of the patriarchs and prophets whom he inspired, and in fulfillment of whose prophecies he came. It would be to destroy the unity and harmony of truth, and to say that Christ destroyed, instead of fulfilling, many of the types and prophecies of the Old Testament. It would be to bring suspicion upon the Church itself,

and to question the Messiahship of its head and founder. But when we consider the positive teachings of Christ, the form of the commission, Peter's declaration on the day of Pentecost, and the household baptisms, recorded in the Acts and in the Epistles, it is unaccountable how anybody ever thought of denying the right of infants to baptism.

CHAPTER XI.

THY KINGDOM COME.

“**THY** kingdom come. Thy will be done on earth, as it is in heaven.”—Matt. vi. 10. This prayer was taught by our Lord to his disciples in his Sermon on the Mount. That sermon contains instruction adapted to, and doubtless intended for, all the subsequent generations of man. This is seen both in the character of the instruction and in the fact that, by the direction of the Lord himself, it has been given to the world as a part of that word which is to be “a lamp to our feet, and a light to our path.” We can hardly suppose that this form of prayer was intended simply to be used by his disciples until the day of Pentecost—at which time, it is thought by some, the kingdom came, and, being then set up, there is no longer any use for the prayer—and is left upon record only as a matter of history. Such a supposition, we think, grows out

of a misconception of what the kingdom of God is, and the want of attention to the very words of the prayer. The idea that God never had a kingdom until about eighteen hundred years ago, is certainly a very strange one—especially to a student of the Bible.

What is a kingdom? The word denotes jurisdiction; and is defined to mean “the territory or country subject to a king;” also, “the inhabitants or population subject to a king.” Now, if we can ascertain when God began to have subjects and to reign or rule over them, we will then know when his kingdom began to exist. As he has not chosen to enlighten us on this subject, and is not likely to do so; and as we have no other means of learning, it is not at all probable that we will ever know, at least in this world.

If, however, we only wish to know when his kingdom began to exist on earth, our inquiry may not be wholly in vain. According to the best information we have or can have on the subject, the first created pair were, at least for a while—how long we

know not—obedient subjects; and if God was King and reigned over them, there was his kingdom. Whether he was known by that name, or not, does not affect the question; the change of name does not change the thing, for God is unchangeable, “the same yesterday, to-day, and forever.” When he was first recognized on earth by the title, King, we do not know; but we do know that he is often spoken of in the Old Testament Scriptures as King, and his people characterized as a kingdom. “For God is my King of old, working salvation in the midst of the earth.” (Ps. lxiv. 12.) “The Lord is our King; he will save us.” (Isa. xxxiii. 22.) “I am the Lord, your Holy One, the Creator of Israel, your King.”—(Isa. xliii. 15.) “But the Lord is the true God, he is the living God, and an everlasting King.” (Jer. x. 10.) Other passages might be quoted, but these are sufficient for our purpose. We design to show that the idea that God never had a kingdom in the world until the day of Pentecost, is opposed both to reason and the Holy Scriptures.

But the very language of the prayer is opposed to such an idea: "Thy kingdom come." It is not a prayer for the origination of something that has no existence, but for the *coming* of a kingdom already existing. The existence of the kingdom is not only implied in the word *come*, but also positively asserted in the concluding part of the prayer: "Thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever." It is not, *thine will be*, but "*thine is the kingdom.*" The *existence* of the kingdom is an acknowledged *fact*; and its glorious government by the King of kings is so fruitful of happiness to his subjects, that the wonder is that all men do not adopt the language of the prayer, nor cease their pleadings till the will of the King is done by them on earth, even as it is done in heaven. This was once the case; and when this prayer is fully answered—as we have no doubt it will be—it will be so again. We say it was so; for we can not doubt that, until they who were made in the image and likeness of God rebelled against their King and became subjects of another king,

even Satan, the will of God was done, by them, on earth as fully, as perfectly, as it was and is done in heaven.

It was because the will of God ceased to be done on earth, that it became necessary to offer such a prayer. The "everlasting King" will consent to reign over none but *willing* subjects, where the judgment is sufficiently matured to admit of choice. Indeed, he *can not*, without destroying the *will* of his subjects; which would be to render sin impossible, and to set aside every law enacted for the punishment of sin. If such were the case, the Bible would be no longer a directory for man, but for God! Every commandment and every prohibition, though given ostensibly to man, would in reality be given to God! What a monstrous thought! What an inconceivable conception! God enacting laws for his own government, and then refusing to obey them! And worse still, punishing his innocent creatures for his own sins! Man having rebelled against his King and forfeited all claim to his protection, must become willing to enter again into his service,

and seek unto him to this end. In this there is to be no selfishness; he must desire, and be willing to labor to effect, the salvation of others also—to bring them to obedience to their King. Hence we are taught to address him not as *my*, but as “*our* Father.” “Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done on earth, as it is in heaven.” It is not to originate a kingdom, but to extend one already existing—“lengthen her cords and strengthen her stakes.” To illustrate, let us suppose the people of the United States to become tired of their present form of government, and to desire a king. They desire not to originate a kingdom—to make a king—but to be taken under the protection of a king already reigning. Would not a petition embracing the substance of this prayer, yea, the very form of the prayer, be appropriate? “Thy kingdom come, thy will be done” in this part of America, as it is done in England—or wherever the king reigned.

Men are sometimes disposed to reverse the order of the prayer, and assume to do the will of God in order that his kingdom

may come. That is, instead of following the direction of Jesus Christ and praying, "Thy kingdom come," they go to work to set up the kingdom themselves. We do not wonder that such men refuse to pray the Lord's Prayer; for truly, if they can do his will without the kingdom of God which "is within," and thus force his recognition of them as his subjects, they have no need of such a prayer—nor, indeed, of any other!

"Thy will be done on *earth*, as it is in *heaven*." Now, if we can learn how the will of God is done in heaven, we will then know how it is to be done on earth. It is true we have no direct information as to what is done in heaven, nor how; yet there are some things about which we can not be mistaken. We necessarily conclude that his will is done perfectly, *i. e.*, that it is done continuously, without interruption and without intermission, and up to the full ability of his subjects; that it is done in perfect harmony, without the slightest discord, without envy or jealousy; that it is done contentedly, without murmuring or

complaining — every one satisfied in his own sphere and with his own character of service. Not that there is perfect equality in heaven; for there are angels and arch-angels, cherubim and seraphim, and the redeemed from among men. But every one is content to remain in the place to which he is appointed, and to do the work assigned him, without complaining that a more honorable position has not fallen to his lot. They do his will, also, without questioning. Having perfect confidence in the wisdom and goodness of God, they do not stop to inquire why this or that service is required of them, but speed with delight on whatever mission they may be sent, or patiently wait the bidding of their King. There is no reluctant service rendered in heaven; there are no halting, hesitating subjects there.

Finally, the will of God is done by *all* the inhabitants of heaven. There are no delinquents there. We can not even imagine an exception. To refuse or fail to do the will of God, would be to forfeit his favor, and necessitate the expulsion of the delinquent from his kingdom. In like

manner the will of God is to be done on earth: perfectly in all respects, willingly, continuously, contentedly, patiently, with delight, and by *all* the inhabitants of the earth. Until this is accomplished, it must continue to be the duty of all who would serve God to pray this prayer. We have need to pray it for ourselves, as individuals, until we are enabled to do his will *perfectly*, in thought, word and deed; for nothing short of this can be supposed to meet the requirement, to fill the measure of the standard here given. Nor will this suffice. We must continue till every child of man remaining upon the earth shall be brought into the kingdom and up to the standard of perfect obedience here laid down—until “the kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ; and he shall reign forever and ever.”

But what of the children? the “little ones?” Are they to be left out? Not if the will of God is done on earth, as it is done in heaven; unless we can believe that there are no “little ones” there. If infants

are received into the kingdom of God in heaven, and his will is to be done on earth as it is in heaven, how can they be excluded from the kingdom here? Is it possible that any can believe it to be the will of God that all the adults, all *actual sinners*, shall be brought into his kingdom, and the little innocent, helpless ones left out? If so, in the name of reason, of common-sense and of our holy Christianity, we demand why? for what cause? What have they done to deserve such treatment? Will it be said, "They are unfit for the kingdom?" If so, we ask, in what does their unfitness consist? Is it for anything they have *done* that they are to be excluded? Surely not; for they have never personally transgressed a single law of God? What then? Is it for what they have *not done*? This can not be; for they have never refused to obey a single command of which they were capable. Is it because God, in his Holy Word, has excluded them? If so, and it can be shown, we accept the decision as final; and, although we are wholly unable to find a single other reason, and, notwithstanding

our love and tender, anxious concern for the well-being of our children, we bow submissively to the will of our Father in heaven, confident that whatever he orders is right. But we must have a "Thus saith the Lord." There must be a positive prohibition, an unmistakable example or a *necessary* inference, before we can consent to close the door of the Church or kingdom of God against our little ones.

This will certainly not be thought unreasonable, when it is a fact, admitted by all, that, by express command of God, they—the "little ones"—were recognized among the chosen, covenant people of God, who, to say the least that can be said—and to say what will not, because it *can not*, be denied—were a type of the Church or kingdom of God, and the seal of the covenant placed upon them. Consider, too, that this was done for nearly two thousand years. Now, if for eighteen hundred years, and more, the chosen type of the Church of God, by special command, embraced infants and made special provision for their recognition as members, is it not reasonable, yea,

unavoidable, to conclude that the antitype will do the same? Did the Lord take so much pains, through so many years, to teach his people the reverse of what he intended they should practice? Who can believe it? Who will dare affirm it, without a positive "Thus saith the Lord?" The thing seems almost impossible; and yet, strange as it may appear, this very thing is done by all who deny the right of church-membership to infants, and refuse them the sealing ordinance by which they should be recognized as "of the kingdom of God." For we unhesitatingly deny that any such authority can be found in all the New Testament Scriptures, and no one has ever pretended that any could be found in the Old.

We still urge the question then, Why are they excluded? Is it because they are depraved? Why, then, are they not excluded from heaven? Is heaven less pure than the kingdom of God on earth? Is that which is unfit for association with the militant Church, fit to company with the glorified host in heaven? Will it be said, that in death they are sanctified and prepared for

heaven? We ask, How do you know? It is not so said in the Scriptures. Besides, we are taught that preparation for heaven is to take place in LIFE, not in death; "for there is no work, nor device, nor wisdom in the grave, whither thou goest." The death of Christ is the meritorious cause, and the Holy Spirit the efficient agent in the salvation of all; and death is nowhere made the condition to any. If it be said, they have not repented; we answer, they have no cause for repentance; they have not sinned, and therefore have no need to repent; and surely they would not be better for having cause for repentance—for having sinned! If it be said, "They do not believe, and none but believers are entitled to membership and baptism;" we demand the proof of this twofold proposition. Where is it said in the Bible that none but believers are in the kingdom and entitled to its blessings and privileges? That believers are, we readily grant and heartily believe; but where, we ask, is it said that none others are? If this could be proved—which it never can—still we demand the proof that

infants are not, in a Bible sense, believers. They are most certainly not disbelievers. Indeed, if faith is essentially prerequisite to citizenship in the kingdom, we fearlessly assert that they are believers; for "of such is the kingdom of God."

It may be objected that the kingdom in the text quoted does not refer to the *visible* Church. If so, we reply, it makes no manner of difference whether it refers to the visible or to the invisible, the militant or the triumphant in heaven; the same conclusion must follow in either case. If it means the visible Church, the controversy is at an end, the question is clearly and definitely settled; if it means the invisible or spiritual—the kingdom of grace in the heart—then are they entitled to *believers'* baptism, for if they have the thing signified, it would be both unreasonable and unjust to deny them the sign. And if it means the Church in her glorified state, then are they most certainly entitled to membership here and fit subjects for baptism as a recognition of that membership; for the text says, "Of such (as these are,

not as they *will be*) is the kingdom." If, just as they are, they are prepared for heaven, surely they are fit for membership here, and ought to be recognized as members.

But it may be said that Jesus did not intend to say that infants are of the kingdom, but only that adults who are like the infants are. To this we reply, the infant is as much like the adult as the adult is like the infant; and if the adult is to be baptized because he is just like the infant, the infant ought to be baptized because he is just like the adult. If they are *just alike*, the same reason that exists in the one case, equally exists in the other also. But, as we have said, the will of God, to "be done on earth as it is in heaven," must be done by *all* the inhabitants of earth; which *can never be* if none but believers are "of the kingdom," and infants are not believers. For, if faith is essential to membership, and infants have not faith, they are not of the kingdom; and if they have not faith because they are not capable of believing, then the capability must exist before faith can be exercised;

and, as unbelief, where the capability of faith exists, is sin, it follows that, unless every child, on arriving at the period of personal responsibility, accepts by faith the offer of salvation in Christ, without falling into sin, there will never be a time when there are not sinners in the world; and while that is the case, the will of God will not be done on earth as it is in heaven. And should they grow up in their infant innocency to manhood's maturity, it would only be to retain their infant relationship to God and his Church, and, of course, would still be out of the kingdom, and that without the means of entering. It would thus be rendered impossible for the will of God ever to be done by all.

If, therefore, this prayer is ever to be answered fully, there is to be a time when there will be no antipedobaptists in the world. Would it not be well to inquire, Can that be right which can not possibly exist in connection with the universal reign of the "everlasting King," who is to "reign forever and ever?" If, when the millennial glory shall dawn upon the earth, antipedo-

baptism can not possibly be practiced, is it at all probable, is it even possible, that its practice can in any way aid in bringing it on? If it be said that the millennium will not be brought about by the conversion of all the wicked, but that they will be destroyed from the earth; we would ask, What will be done with the infants? Will they be destroyed, too? if so, for what? They will certainly not be sent to hell; and if to heaven, why? Because they are unfit to dwell in the Church on earth? Who will dare say it? If not destroyed, they must either be recognized as members of the Church, or grow up outside. The first would be an end of antipedobaptism, and the last would effectually defeat the end contemplated in the prayer.

Again, the kingdom of God is *one*. There is not a plurality of kingdoms, no more than there is a plurality of kings. Indeed, there can not be; for a kingdom is composed of the subjects of the king, and it takes *all* the subjects to constitute the kingdom—less than all would be only a part of the kingdom; and if it takes all to consti-

tute one, of course there can not be two, of the same subjects. Paul speaks of "the whole family in heaven and on earth;" and we are taught in this prayer to call the King, "Our Father," showing that the subjects are the children of the King and compose a part of that "one family," whose Father is in heaven. And our Savior himself says, "Many shall come from the East and from the West, from the North and from the South, and shall sit down with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven." Here, centuries after Abraham, Isaac and Jacob had been called from labor to rest, we are told that many shall sit with them in the kingdom of heaven; and it can not mean that part of the kingdom which lies beyond the river of death, for "the children of the kingdom shall be cast out."

This text clearly establishes one, or both, of two propositions, either of which being established, infant membership follows unavoidably, viz: the oneness of the kingdom in heaven and on earth, or the identity of the Abrahamic Church and that which ex-

ists under what is called the Christian dispensation. If the first, it being admitted by all that infants are in heaven, how can they who exclude them here claim to be any part of the Church of God? much less claim to be the only and the all of that Church on earth!! Would not that be to divide the kingdom against itself? If the second, they being, by express command of God, for nearly two thousand years recognized as members, and having never been legislated out, are most certainly members yet. If both, which we think altogether probable, it would be difficult to prove that any organization refusing them membership is entitled to be recognized as any part of that kingdom. Be this as it may, it is demonstrably certain that when this time spoken of by the Psalmist (Ps. xxii. 27, 28) comes, and "all the ends of the world shall remember and turn unto the Lord, and all the kindreds of the nations shall worship before" him, no such organization can exist. "For the kingdom is the Lord's, and he is governor among the nations;" and when

he comes to reign in millennial glory upon the earth, he will see to it that the "little ones" are not forbidden "to come unto him;" for "of such is the kingdom of God."

CHAPTER XII.

PARENTAL RESPONSIBILITY.

“Train up a child in the way he should go: and when he is old, he will not depart from it.”—Prov. xxii. 6.

THE subject indicated in the heading of this chapter, is one the importance of which can not be overestimated. It lies at the foundation of all good society, and is burdened with the interest of men for time and for eternity. The responsibilities of parents are to be measured by the amount of influence of which they are capable, and the capacity for happiness or misery of those who may come within reach of that influence, directly or indirectly; together with the duration through which it is to reach.

If the individual happiness of a single child only were involved, and that only through an ordinary lifetime, it would be impossible to estimate the responsibility of him whose influence is to determine the

happiness or unhappiness of that child; but when we consider the number to be reached through the one on whom the influence is brought immediately to bear, and the fact that character is made for eternity, the responsibility of him whose influence is to mold that character, is absolutely appalling.

The influence brought to bear upon the child by parents is felt wherever that child touches society or comes in contact with human beings, and through his whole life. Every individual associate, every family, every community in which he lives, every association with which he is connected, and, finally, the whole country of which he is a citizen, feels that influence. As a child, a brother or sister, a husband or wife, a neighbor or friend, a citizen; in any and all these relations he carries with him the character molded by the influence of his parents, and according as that character is good or bad, enhances the happiness or misery of others. These facts are self-evident to every reflecting mind; and were we to look no farther than the present life, it

is certainly a subject the importance of which must be felt by all. The parent, by reason of the relation he sustains as such, wields a greater influence over the child than any other person can, and that whether he will or not; and that influence is of the same nature, and in proportion to the strength of his own character. These thoughts might be illustrated and elaborated to almost an unlimited extent; but it is not of *influence* we propose to write, but of *responsibility*—responsibility of parents.

What is responsibility? Need we define the term? Rather would we say, Inquire within, the meaning is there. What do you understand by it? What is the fact of consciousness when you feel yourself responsible for anything? Did you ever analyze the word and take its bearings: Of it, self is the center, and authority on the one side, and duty on the other, are its sinews of strength. Destroy the one or the other and responsibility is gone. Take an illustration: A man signs a note as security for the payment of a specified sum. The principal fails, and his security is

bound; what constitutes responsibility in the case? It is his duty to pay; but if there were no means of enforcing that duty, there would be no responsibility—legal responsibility, I mean; but when authority and duty meet in the *able* self, responsibility is the result. We say *able* self, for if there be no ability, there can be no responsibility. If duty could be supposed to exist without the ability to discharge it, there could be no responsibility; and if authority could be brought to bear to enforce the performance of that which it is not the duty of the performer to do—and sometimes it is—that would not constitute responsibility, in the true sense of the word.

We would not, however, be understood to mean that authority to enforce must, in every case, manifest itself in actual *power*, producing payment in *kind* up to the measure of duty. That would be to destroy, not to constitute responsibility. We have said that duty is on one side, and authority on the other, of the conscious self. But this was said in accommodation of facts as they *appear*. In an important sense, it is

true; but in a yet more important and higher sense, duty and authority are on the same side, *i. e.*, duty is to the one in authority. If this be not so, then there is no such thing as authority, but only arbitrary power, and he who seeks to enforce duty is a despot. Nay, duty is also an impossibility, upon such hypothesis.

A moment's reflection will suffice to show that duty is, so to speak, the rebound of authority, and that out of the two grows responsibility. Right is the true ground of authority, and, strictly speaking, there is no authority for wrong-doing; that is, the right to authorize wrong is lodged nowhere, and whenever it is done, it is by usurpation and upon the principle that "might makes right." Right, then, is or should be the end of all law—all government; and as it is always duty to do right, duty must always have reference to authority, to the law of right, and to that through the properly appointed guardians of law. It is by this means that rights are secured and protection guaranteed to all that come between us and the law, to the authority

of which duty binds us. In other words, we can do no wrong to any person or thing without violating the obligation with which duty binds us to authority. Thus we see that it is for violence done to *itself* that law inflicts a penalty, rather than for the injury resulting to another from the infraction of law. In this view of the subject there is deep significance in the old adage, "Self-preservation is the first law of nature;" for if she preserve not herself, she will not be able to preserve others.

Responsibility can be predicated only of beings capable of volition, of free agency. Therefore, to force obedience to law, to compel the discharge of duty in every case, would be to destroy responsibility, as it would be to destroy the power of choosing—the will power. When we say, therefore, that, in order to the existence of responsibility, there must be authority to enforce obedience, we must be understood to mean that the subject of government may choose between doing what is required and suffering the consequences of his disobedience. In proportion as the certainty of this alter-

native diminishes, responsibility is lessened; and in proportion as the sense of responsibility is lessened, disregard of law is increased. In the relations which men sustain to each other, it is often the case that the conduct of one affects injuriously the interests of others, where the law can not reach the case and no penalty can be inflicted. In such cases, unless there is some authority and law above human enactment and beyond human enforcement, there is no responsibility. Indeed, if there be no retribution hereafter, then, if a man can evade the law and avoid punishment for his wrong-doings, he thereby destroys all responsibility.

In a word, a future existence and accountability to a superior Being are necessary to the very existence of moral character; and unless man is to be held responsible after death for the manner in which he has spent his time in this world, moral character, duty and responsibility are meaningless terms. Especially is this true of parental responsibility; for beyond a prescribed limit, and that in a small compass, there is no au-

thority in this life that holds man to account for the training of his children.

In considering the responsibility of parents, then, we must take into the account the relation in which they stand to their children on the one hand, and to the authority imposing their duties on the other. We must then inquire what those duties are, and what will result from their neglect. Not only what will result to the children—for we have seen that duty is to authority—but also what will result to him on whom the responsibility rests, and to him in whom the right centers and by whom duty is imposed.

The relation of parents to their children is the nearest conceivable relation, involving personal existence itself—the existence of the children; and no possible description of it could make it plainer or give a better understanding of it than the simple observation of the fact as it appears to every man, and the instinctive interest, planted in the very consciousness of our being, which is felt by all parents in their offspring. Out of this relation alone, near and dear as it

is, no responsibility could arise, and by it no duty could be imposed. It matters not what interest of the children may be involved in the conduct of the parents, if no other party is interested, that interest can never evolve duty, nor impose responsibility upon the parents. For evidence of the truth of this position we might appeal to the judgment of every reflecting mind; but to help reflection, let us illustrate: In civil relations, *i. e.*, man's relation to his fellows through the civil law, the parent is responsible to the law, through its officers, for the conduct of his children; but only because, and in so far as, the conduct of his children affects the interests of others. It is not even possible to conceive of law as taking cognizance of, and punishing for, an act that affects the interest of none but the actor.

We have said that the parent is responsible to the law for the conduct of his children; but, strictly speaking, this is not true. It is true only in so far as the conduct of the child is the result of the conduct of the parent; but true in this sense up to the full

measure of parental duty, on the positive as well as on the negative side. If, by precept or example, he teach and influence the child to do wrong, and the law visit the penalty due to the act of the child upon him, it will be because he, by that teaching and influence, was personally guilty of its violation. Or if he neglect any duty involved in the proper training of the child, and that neglect is followed by wrong acts in the child that, but for the neglect, he would not have done, the parent is guilty of, and punishable for, the violation of the law that required the performance of that duty. Thus we see that, in fact, no individual is or can be held responsible except for his own personal conduct. It is because the parent reaches others through the child, that the law, in visiting its penalty, reaches him through the same medium.

If there were no relation but that existing between parent and child, as such, there would be no responsibility upon the parent. If the child were related to some other person or power, between which and the parent no relation existed, still there would be

no responsibility upon the parent. Or if the parent were related to some other, between whom and the child there were no relation, responsibility would not result. Besides the relation of parent and child, they must both be related, and alike related, to something superior to, and which has a claim upon, both, and the right to control or give direction to their conduct. The rule prescribing the course of conduct is the law of their action, and is the expression of the will of the party having the right to govern. Law is the work of intelligence; there can be no law without it. The word implies, yea, expresses intelligence. Intellect can not conceive of law except as the expression of will, and will is impossible without intellect. Obedience to law is yielding to the will of the lawgiver. If that obedience be rendered by intelligent beings, it must be a voluntary obedience—and so of disobedience—or responsibility would be impossible. In civil governments, the law is the expressed will of the rulers—not of the officers.

Now, parent and child are related to

government as subjects, and, as such, owe obedience to the laws of the government. It is out of these relations, to the child on the one side and to the government on the other, that the responsibility of the parent to the law, with reference to the child, grows. If the child were not also a subject, *i. e.*, if the government had no right to the obedience of the child, and the child no right to the protection of the government, the parent would not, *could* not, be responsible to the government for the training of the child. These relations are essential to the existence of duty, in that direction, and duty is a necessity where they exist. Perfect and continuous obedience to all the laws of government is the duty of every subject; and authority to enforce law is necessary to the existence of government. Out of these, duty and authority, grows responsibility. Therefore, unless man is related to the government of God, in this life, as well as to his children, parental duties have no higher origin than political government, and the responsibilities of parents are to be measured by the amount of punish-

ment inflicted by civil authority for neglect in the proper training of children with reference to such government.

If, on the other hand, man is related to the government of God, his duty to his children, with reference to that government, can exist only in so far as they sustain the same relation to the same government. It is because God has claims upon them—a right to their service—and it is their duty to render obedience to his law, equally with the parent, that it is the duty of the parents to train up their children in or under the government of God, teaching them to observe all things whatsoever he has commanded. It follows, therefore, that whatever relation the parents sustain to God and his government, on the supposition that they are in the line of duty—are of his kingdom—is sustained by their children also, while in their moral minority; and that to hold them under the restraints of grace and prevent the severance of that relation by personal transgression, is the object of religious training. “It is not the will of your Father which is in heaven,

that one of these little ones should perish;" and it can not be his will that they should take the first step in that direction. They are his, redeemed by the precious blood of Christ, and entitled, by virtue of the atoning death of Jesus, to citizenship in the kingdom of God, and to the protection of its laws—"of such is the kingdom of God."

So intimate is their relationship with Jesus their Savior, that he says, "Whoso shall receive one such little child in my name, receiveth me." It is not the will of the Father that any of them should perish, and it can not therefore be his will that they should sin; for nothing but sin, personal transgression of law, can cause them to perish.

Whatever course will most likely prevent their sinning, then, it must be the duty of parents to pursue. If to train them up out of the Church, without the sign of Divine ownership upon them, and with the idea that they have the right to choose whether they will serve God or not, and *how*, be most likely to prevent such a result, then

that is the course for parents to pursue. But, if to recognize their relationship to God and his kingdom by the appointed sign, enroll them among the people of God and teach them that they are of the kingdom, and, therefore, have no right to sin, be most likely to keep them from the paths of the destroyer, then to neglect such a course is to shoulder a fearful responsibility. In a word, the duty growing out of the relation of parents to their children on the one side, and to God on the other, is to "bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord;" and whatever is necessary to this end, or is best calculated to effect it, is a part of that duty.

If it be asked, as often it is, "Is it possible to so-train children that they will not need to be regenerated, to be 'born of the Spirit?'" we answer, the question has nothing to do with the subject under consideration, and may be answered affirmatively or negatively without affecting the truth of our proposition. That they are in such a relation to God, through Jesus Christ, that, dying without actual sin, they will be taken to

heaven, no one will be bold enough to deny; and that death is made the condition of salvation to any, will hardly be affirmed. If regeneration, in the case of an adult, must take place *before* death, it must also in the case of an infant, and as that is the work of the Holy Spirit, we need give ourselves no concern about it.

If, however, it be asked, "Is it possible for them to grow up without committing actual sin?" we answer, IT IS. The ability to sin is the ability to not sin. To say that any act is necessitated, is to say that it is not sin; and to say that it is not necessitated, is to say that it was possible to not do it. No man can condemn as morally wrong any act, whether his own or another's, which he knows it was impossible to avoid doing. Sin is not only a voluntary act, it is a voluntary act of one capable of knowing right from wrong. Until a child reaches that point in the development of his intellectual powers, he is incapable of sin. Let us suppose one to have just reached that point. He has never sinned—never been capable of sin. He is now capable

of sinning, but has not sinned. The first temptation to sin is presented to him. Can any man believe it possible for him to yield to the temptation and sin, without, at the same time, believing it possible for him to resist the temptation and not sin? Certainly not; for when we are satisfied that he *could not* do otherwise, it is impossible to attach blame to the act, and sin is always blamable.

Let us, then, suppose that he does not yield, that he resists the first temptation and does not sin. He is now a morally accountable being—no longer “an unconscious babe”—but his relation to God is unchanged, he is still in a saved state; the only difference being that before he was saved unconditionally, now he is personally accountable and complies with the condition—he stands by faith. If a believer now, what was he before? His mind, or, if you prefer, his heart, has undergone no moral change—no change that affects the moral man; he simply has not unbelieved—has not fallen through unbelief. He is now a child “of God by faith in Christ Jesus;”

what was he before? If there has been no change in his relation to God, he was certainly a child of God before; and, if so, he can not now be entitled to anything pertaining to the relation of a child, to which he was not entitled then. Either, then, he was entitled to baptism before or he is not entitled to it now. Thus it is seen to be a logical necessity either to accept infant baptism, or to reject believer's baptism.

If capable of resisting the first temptation, he can resist the second, and will be better prepared to do so; for with the first victory will come an increase of strength—and so on through the whole battle of life. This is simply growth in grace, and to effect it, instrumentally, would be to bring up a child “in the nurture and admonition of the Lord.” If any should ask, “Is it ever done?” we answer, we do not know. We know it is possible, and that it ought to be done; but whether there are instances of it in practical life we have no means of ascertaining with absolute certainty, as it is matter of personal experience, and can be *known* only by those who have it. Per-

haps most men—some would say all—sin after they are converted, as adults; but does that prove that it is impossible to live without sin? If so, then Jesus does not, *can not*, “save his people from their sins.” It is certainly not necessary that we should prove that a Christian may, and ought to, abstain from all sin—“all appearance of evil;” and if it is not only possible for, but the duty of, one who has formed sinful habits to overcome those evil habits by the grace of God, and form habits of piety, is it not easier to cultivate piety where there are no fixed habits of evil to overcome? Which is easier, to reform a drunken son upon whom the habit has grown from childhood to mature manhood, or to train a child from infancy to detest and avoid all that intoxicates?

What is true of drunkenness, is true of any and every other sin. It is easier to avoid the doing of any wrong thing the first time, than to break and conquer a habit formed by the repetition of it through a series of years. It is easier to train a climbing vine from the time the first ten-

drils put forth in search of a support, than after it has been allowed to creep upon the earth and twine itself about the prostrated rubbish by which it may be surrounded. So it is easier to train the thoughts and affections of a young immortal, from its first consciousness of dependence upon and accountability to a superior Being, to "things which are above," than after they have been allowed to twine about the groveling things of earth, and to strengthen with the growth of years.

The idea that, by some sort of unadmitted fatality, all must sin, is far too prevalent; and even among Methodists, whose creed excludes everything that trammels the will, it is almost universally admitted that all *will* sin, with the evident conviction that there is absolute certainty (not necessity) of it, growing out of the depravity of human nature. Would it not be well to inquire, why this certainty? Why is it that nearly all *do* sin? It is admitted that in no single case is sin a necessity—that every individual may and ought to avoid sin. Why is it they do not? If in any given

case it can be prevented, it ought to be; and if it ought to be, and is not, there is blame. To whom does it attach? That the individual immediately concerned—the sinner—is to blame, will not be denied, for that would be to deny that he sins; but is he alone to be blamed? Remember, we are talking about the *first* sin. Now, if God had not provided, in and through Jesus Christ, grace to enable the child, on arriving at the period of accountability, to resist temptation and *not* sin, it would be impossible for him to sin; in other words, he could never reach the point of accountability—could never be an accountable being.

If Jesus died for the children, and there is such a thing as “preventing grace,” unless we assume that God works without means and instruments—which would be to discard the Bible and silence all teaching—it follows that the parents are the instruments through whom these facts are to be brought to the knowledge of the children so soon as they are capable of receiving them, and by whom all available means are to be used to lead the minds and hearts of

the children up to Christ. We can not possibly know at what precise period in the age of a child accountability will begin, but responsibility with the parent begins with the relation itself; and the very uncertainty as to the time when the child will be liable to personal sin, argues the necessity of beginning at once to fortify against the attacks of the enemy.

Inherent depravity would give the enemy decided advantage, were it not for the counteracting power of grace provided in the atonement by Jesus Christ. This grace is not only provided, but is unconditionally bestowed up to the time of personal ability to reject it or, by faith in Jesus, to make it available in resisting the first temptation to sin. Whether he will do the one or the other, depends largely upon the influence brought to bear by his heaven-appointed guardians, the parents. Here is responsibility! Oh! that it were felt and appreciated by all! If, in recognition of heaven's claim upon the child and of the duty imposed by the relation they sustain to God and it, they cause it to be brought by baptism into vis-

ible connection with the Church, and commit it by faith in prayer to God, being careful to keep it out of the reach of evil influences and to set before it the example of holy living, they may have the satisfaction of seeing it grow "up in the way it should go," exhibiting in practical life that purity and holiness which are the natural outgrowth of the inner consciousness of conformity to the law of love. If they neglect it, the noxious weeds of sin, which are indigenous to the soil of depravity, will spring up and deform the life of the child and bring sorrow to the hearts of the parents.

The proper training of children is a means of grace to the parents. The desire and purpose to mold and fashion the life and character of the child after the most approved standard of morals, will induce watchfulness over their own conduct, lest by some unguarded word or act they destroy the confidence of the child in their own moral integrity, and thus lose the influence necessary to perfect success in its proper training; or by means of that confidence instill erroneous ideas touching the

standard of right. Not only so, but the effort to lead the thoughts and affections of their children to the Savior, will have a tendency to strengthen their own faith in, and intensify their own love for, him.

Whatever is possible of attainment in religious life, it is the duty and privilege of every child of God to seek; and to neglect any means of grace ordained to this end is to incur the displeasure of God and to forfeit the degree of happiness attainable thereby, and, at the same time, to withhold from God the service which is his due. Thus we see that, in estimating the responsibilities of parents, we are to consider relations, the duties growing out of those relations, and the results following the neglect of those duties to all the parties related—the results to the children, to the parents, and to God.

With the birth of a child begins a relation which, by its very nature, imposes new duties and creates new responsibilities. Created by God and redeemed by the blood of Jesus, it is the duty of man to respond to the claims of God upon him up to the

“full measure of his capacity, and in every relation of life.” Relation imposes duty, and duty is measured by ability. Duty can not go beyond ability, nor can it stop short of it. Duty is oughtness of response to the claim of God. God has absolute right to, and claims the obedience of every man; and every man ought to respond to his claim by observing all the requirements of his law. On this response is suspended his own happiness. If he comply fully with the requirements of God, he will be perfectly happy; in proportion as he fails to do so, he will be miserable. His capacity for happiness is also his capacity for suffering. Duty is the hinge on which it turns.

In ministering to the happiness of others, we enhance our own. It is the duty of parents to minister, as far as possible, to the happiness of their children; and, as the purest and most enduring happiness of which a human being is capable is found in conscious communion with God and fellowship with his Son, Jesus Christ, they are required to “bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord.” What-

ever that means, it may, and ought to be, done. Dr. A. Clarke says: "Literally, *nourish them in the discipline and instruction of the Lord.*" This is equivalent to "teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you," in the commission, which comes after discipling and baptizing. If, therefore, it is their duty to "nourish them in the discipline and instruction of the Lord," it is their duty to have them baptized and brought visibly into disciplinary relation with his people. A failure to discharge this duty is a failure to recognize the relations existing, and is detrimental to the interests of all the parties.

The literal rendering of Dr. Clarke, however, we venture to suggest, would be improved by a change in the preposition: "Nourish them *with* the discipline and instruction of the Lord." They are to be nourished with—*i. e.*, by means of—"the discipline and instruction;" not nourished *in* (into), *i. e.*, brought into "the discipline and instruction" by means of nourishment. The preposition *en* (εν) is *never* expressive of motion into. It expresses inness, as to

place or time, as already existing, or the instrument or means by which a thing is done. We would not say, a child is nourished *IN* the breast of the mother; but with—by means of. A child can not be nourished (brought up) physically, until it has a physical existence. Neither can one be nourished spiritually—as a child of God—until he has a spiritual existence—exists as a child of God. Being a child of God, he is to be nourished with “the sincere milk of the word,” *i. e.*, by means of “the discipline and instruction of the Lord.” The children, then, as we have already seen, are the children of God, or they could not be “nourished (brought up) with the discipline and instruction of the Lord.”

The apostle recognizes the principle for which we contend, and sets forth the relations out of which the duty he seeks to enforce grows.

It is the duty of parents not only to teach their children what is right, what they ought to do or not to do, but also to see that they do it—to enforce obedience. Absolute obedience to moral law can not, as we have

seen, be enforced, neither by man nor by God. Where personal responsibility begins, and thenceforward, the will and the motive must harmonize to constitute true obedience in that which is outwardly expressive of moral character. Strictly speaking, no act is his who does not will it; but so far as the outward expression, the physical movement, is concerned, it may result from the will and be in strictest harmony with law when, for want of a proper motive in the agent, there is no moral obedience. It is because of this fact that instruction is necessary. If it were not so, where power to control the movements of the physical man exists, there would be no need of instruction. Indeed, instruction on a moral basis would be impossible. As well speak of instructing a mere machine—a sewing machine, a saw-mill, or anything else. When we speak, therefore, of enforcing obedience, we must be understood to mean only that such measures are to be used as will induce the performance of the required act by him of whom it is required, and, at the same time, inculcate the principle of obedience

on a moral basis—of doing with a proper motive.

As this principle can not be appealed to in early infancy, the habit of obedience must be cultivated by other means. The commands of the parent must be enforced by appeal to fear, the fear of physical pain; and, as intellect develops and reason begins to work, the mind will query, *Why?* The habit of obedience being already formed, the reason will be readily seen and accepted, and the motive will take a higher stand. From looking to the threatened punishment as a reason for obedience, the child now begins to consider the question of *right* and the reward of conscious innocence, and his obedience takes on a moral quality. He feels that he is being *good* in doing *right*, and cares nothing for the penalty attaching to disobedience, because his desire and purpose are to obey; and to obey because it is *right*.

Moral obedience is practical religion. But as moral obedience is obedience to moral law; and as moral law, of necessity, has to do with motives; and as none but

God can know the motives; it follows that, if there were no God, there could be no moral law. And, as without a knowledge of the law there can be no motive to obedience, it follows that, if there be no revelation made by God to man, there can be no moral conduct, no moral character. Either, then, the Bible is of God, or there is no such thing as duty on a moral basis—no such thing as moral character. But the Bible is of God, and furnishes the only standard by which moral character can be measured.

If, therefore, the question be raised, What am I to teach my children to do and not to do? the answer is, Any and everything that God has taught in the Bible touching moral duty. Obedience to parents is the sum of what God requires of early childhood. "Children, obey your parents in the Lord: for this is right"—is the simple instruction to children. "Honor thy father and mother; which is the first commandment with promise"—is but another way of expressing the same thing, with encouragement to its performance. Now, in what are children to

obey their parents? and why? As to the first question, there is no limit, unless it be found in the expression, "In the Lord." They are to obey in all things. But to obey "in the Lord," whatever that may mean, it is evident that parents and children must sustain the same relation to him. Imagine, if you can, a parent meeting the requirements of God's law upon him, with reference to his children, while he is himself out of the Church and in open rebellion against God. When you can do that, and not before, you will be able to understand how the same thing can be done while the parent is in covenant relation to God, and his children not. How do you think Abraham would have succeeded in commanding his children after him in the service of the Lord, if he had refused to enter into covenant with him and to take upon him the seal of the covenant? Or how, if he had taken it and refused to recognize God's claim upon them, and their right to the seal of the covenant and its blessings? Reader, think on these things. If you think that Abraham could not have

succeeded in either case, would it not be well to consider the question with reference to parents and children of the present day? What is church-membership but a covenant relation to God and his people? And what is the seal of that covenant, if it is not baptism? Regard church-membership as a covenant relation, and baptism as the seal of the covenant and a pledge upon our part to perform the duties we owe to God, and a sign of that which God will do for us; and it will be as difficult to conceive of a parent meeting the requirements of God's law upon him, while leaving his children out of the Church and without baptism, as it is to conceive that Abraham could have done the same thing, and left his children out of the covenant and without its seal.

But *why* are children to obey their parents in the Lord? Is it not because they can not comprehend and appreciate the relation they sustain to the Lord, and can not, therefore, be held personally responsible for the discharge of duties growing out of that relation? and therefore God has placed

the parents, in a sense, in his stead to the children, that he may hold them responsible for the conduct of the children? Is not this the reason that parents and guardians are, by civil authority, held responsible for the conduct of children? Are not parents representatives of the government to their children, in so far as they are amenable to the government? and only to that extent? If the child owes no allegiance to the government, and has no rights to be protected by it, the parent can in no sense be responsible to the government for the conduct of the child. Just so in our relation to the government of God, the Church. If the child owes no allegiance to the Church, and has no rights to be protected by it, the parent is under no obligation to train it to the observance of the laws of the Church—that is, to give it moral training. It is only because God has equal claim upon both, that the parent is responsible for the moral training of the child. Whatever, therefore, it is the duty of the parent to do, it is his duty to teach and command the

child to do; and whatever visible sign of relationship to God he takes, by authority of God, upon himself, it is his duty to have placed upon the child also.

Duty and rights go together, and are inseparable. You can not even think of a man as owing duty to any government or authority under which he has no rights. Is it his duty to obey the laws of his country—federal, State or municipal? Is it not because he has the right of protection under and by those laws? Or, if you prefer it, let it be said that he has the right of protection because he obeys. Why, then, should he obey? Is it simply because by so doing he secures the right? If so, duty is really to himself; or, rather, there is no duty at all, but only interest. Be this as it may, it is certainly true that wherever duty is found, rights exist. It is the duty of the child to obey the parent; but it is equally, and as certainly, his right to be protected and cared for by the parent. You can not separate them, not even in thought. If the duty extend to God, through the parent,

the right goes with it; the right of protection and blessing from God, through the parent. If the duty is owed to God by the parent, and must be discharged upon or through the child, then the right of the parent with respect to the child is co-extensive with the duty. So that, if it is his duty, as a Christian, to inculcate Christian principles in and require Christian conduct of the child, it is his right to have the child brought into Christian relationship and association. In other words, if it is his duty to teach the child to be a Christian, and to require it to observe Christian rules, it is his right to bring it into the Church and have it recognized as a disciple (learner) of Christ; which can be done only by baptism.

In short, whatever it is a man's duty to do, it is his duty to have his child to do. It is no more a man's duty to keep the Sabbath than it is to see that his child keeps it. This is true of every item in the decalogue, whether to do or not to do. In a word, every requirement made of man, of

a moral nature, is made of his children through him, and it is his duty to see that they meet it. No parent can *allow* his child to break any one of the commandments, and be guiltless. This is especially true of Christian parents; for, in addition to the obligation which rests upon all and is inherent in the very nature of man, he has solemnly pledged himself, in the vow of church-membership—taken in baptism—to the discharge of duty—to nourish his children with the discipline and instruction of the Lord.

If it is the duty of the parent to teach and require of the child the observance of these laws, it is the child's duty to obey. This will not be questioned. Now answer this question: Can it be the duty of any human being to observe all the requirements of religion, to obey every law of God, and yet not be entitled to membership in the Church, and to the sign of discipleship to him whose teachings he is expected to receive and practice? If not, then either infants are entitled to church-membership

and to baptism, or they are not to be taught and required to keep the commandments of God.

Again. If it is right to raise children out of the Church and without baptism, it can not be wrong for them, when raised, to stay out of the Church and remain unbaptized. This, it seems to me, is a self-evident proposition, and one that, if applied to anything else, would be universally accepted. Let us try it. Can you conceive that, if it were right to teach and require a child to swear, to lie, to steal, to get drunk, or to do anything else, it would be wrong for that child, when grown up, to continue to do these things? The thing is impossible. And it is equally impossible to conceive that it is right to raise a child out of the Church, and yet that it is wrong for him to stay out when he is grown. It is as evident as that two and two make four that, if it is right to raise children out of the Church and without baptism, it can never become their duty to join the Church and receive baptism. As certainly, then,

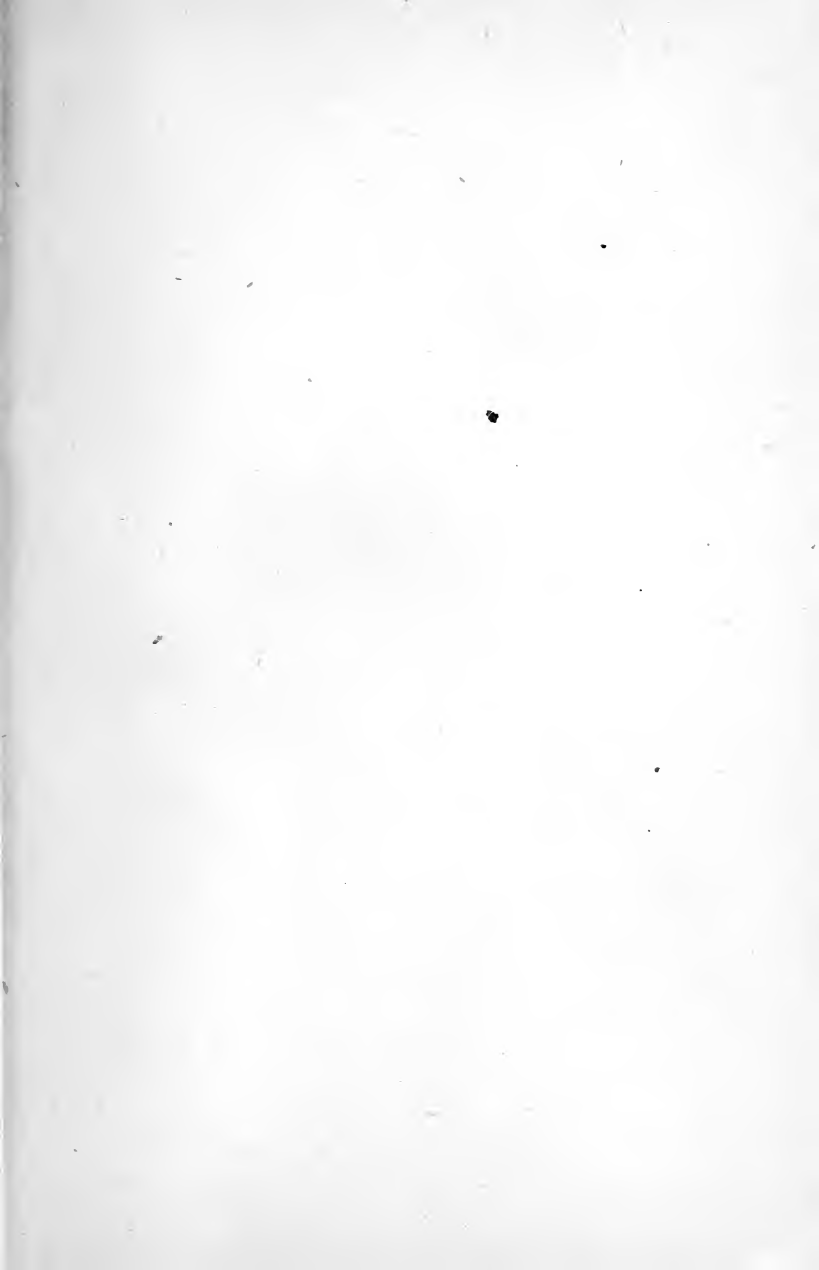
as it is the duty of anybody to join the Church, and to be baptized, just so certainly is it right to baptize children and raise them up in the Church.

In conclusion, if we could measure the length of eternity, calculate the worth and capacity of immortal souls and the love of God for them, prescribe the exact limit of parental power, under God, in molding the character of the child, and appreciate fully the difference between the terms *lost* and *saved*, as applied to those for whom Christ died, we might then grasp the fullness of meaning attaching to the word *responsibility* as applied to parents. If we could tell the joys of the saved, describe the beauties of the heavenly city and the infinite delights of its immortal citizens, with their star-gemmed crowns, their harps of gold, their pure white robes, and, above all, the presence-glory of the King Eternal, which is the light of the city, we might unfold in part the inducements to the discharge of parental duties. But to say nothing of these, the consciousness of right-doing and the

peace of God which passeth knowledge, and which fill the heart of every faithful child of God, are a present and sufficient reward; and ought to be sufficient to induce faithfulness upon the part of all—especially of parents to their children.

THE END.

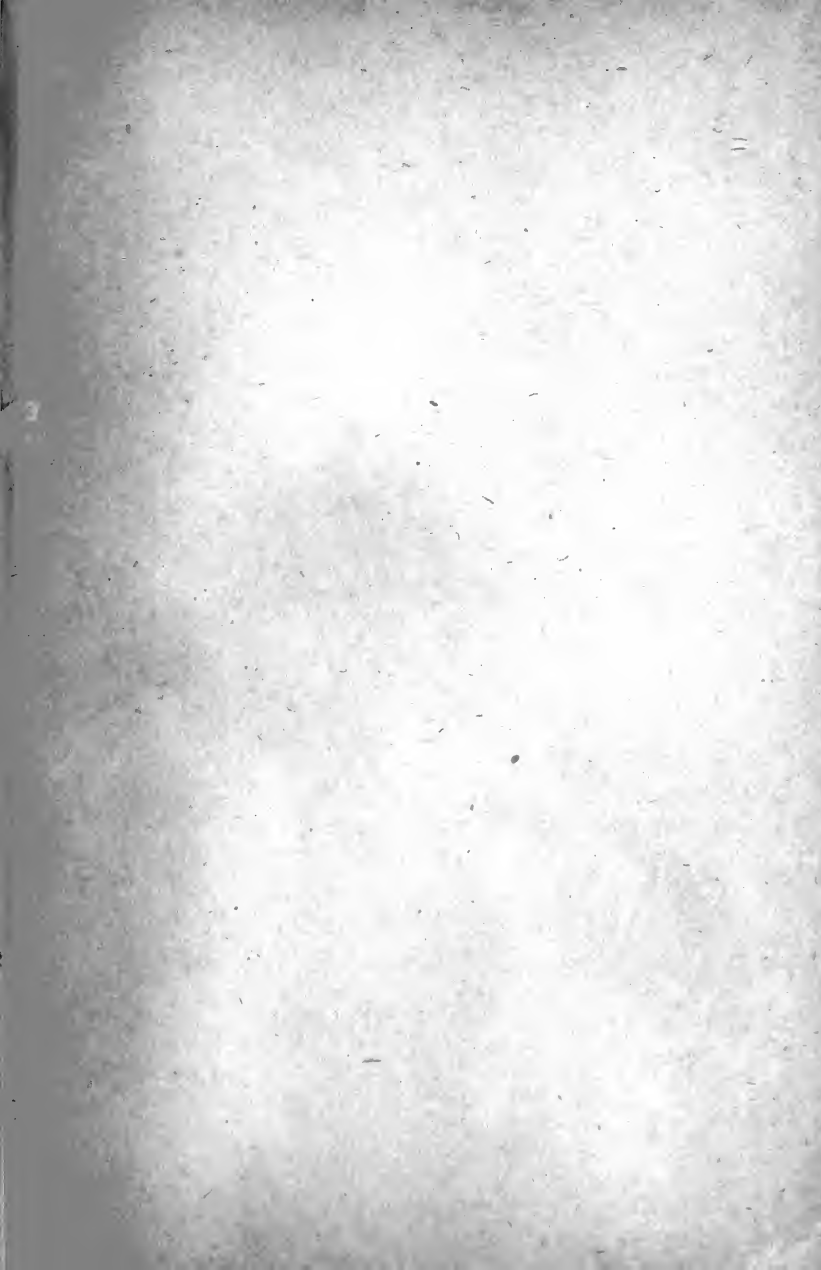




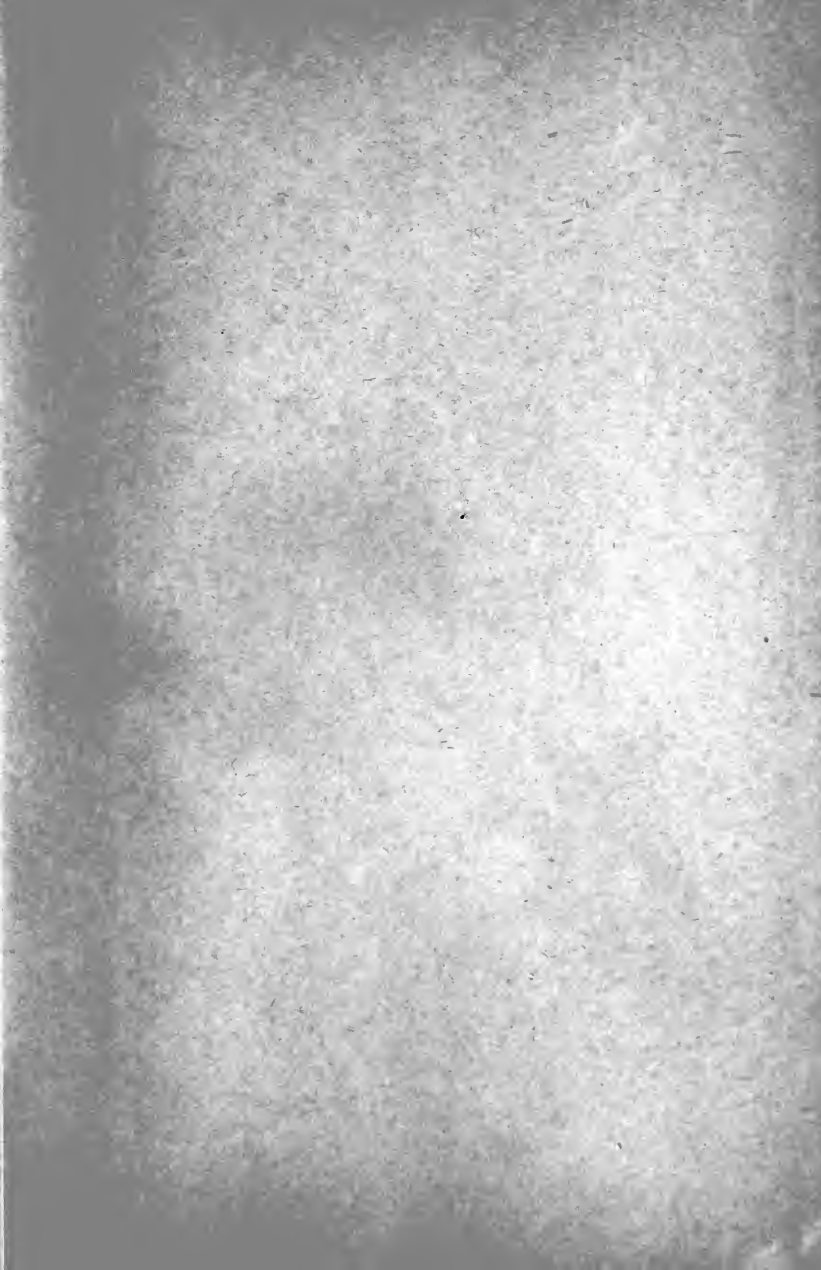












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